

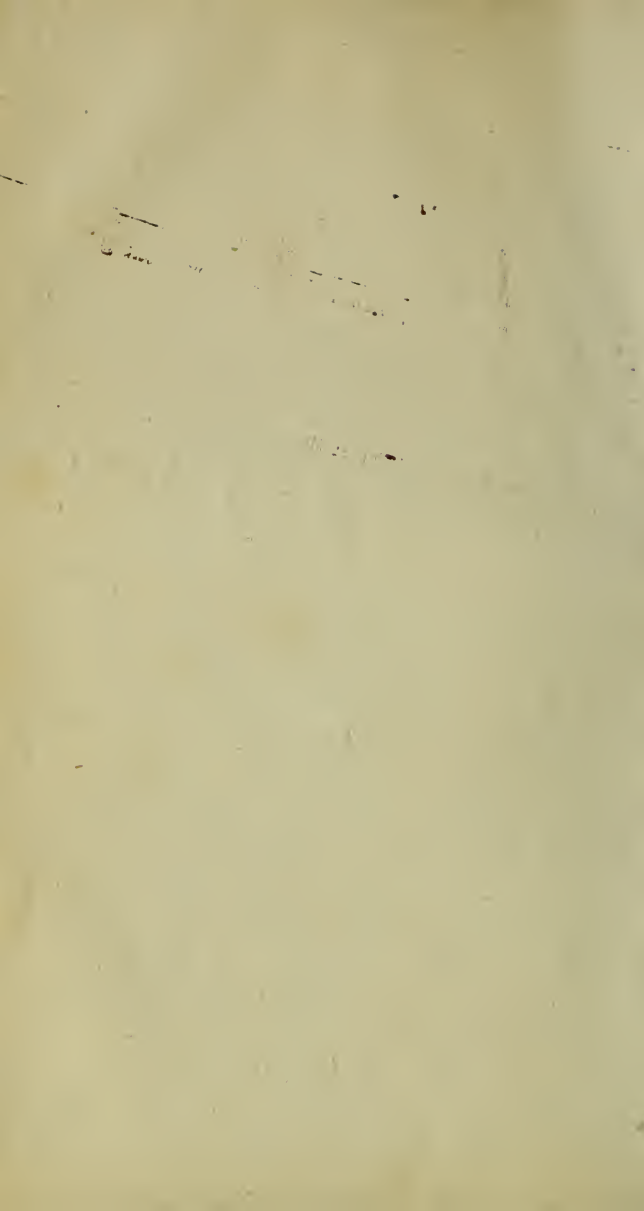
WABASH AVE



M. E. Church



Sunday School











The Little German Drummer-Boy.

FRONTISPIECE.

THE
LITTLE GERMAN
DRUMMER BOY.

PHILADELPHIA:
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No. 56 NORTH FOURTH STREET.

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THE present tale has been translated from the German of Gustav Moritz. Its design is to inculcate the duty of self-sacrifice in the most trying circumstances of life.

THE DRUMMER BOY.

CHAPTER I.

THE SICK CHILD.

THE story we are going to tell refers to the period when Europe was in a state of general warfare; when French armies covered almost every country on the continent. Great Britain, by being an island in the ocean, was happily exempted from the calamities of that terrible war. At a vast expense it defended itself by its ships. Thus saved from invasion, the people in the towns and villages of England knew only of war by report. How different the fate of the inhabitants of those towns on the continent, who continually, and without warning, suffered from the violence of soldiers! When a regiment entered a town, it took possession of the houses of the people of all ranks; who, to save their lives, gave up everything that was de-

manded. Frequently, however, the people were killed from a mere spirit of mischief, and their children maltreated or carried off. It was on an occasion of this kind that the following incidents took place.

Emily Werner, a little girl of about six years of age, was the daughter of a tradesman in a certain town in Germany. At the time of which we write she was very ill. A violent fever had attacked her, and there was scarcely any hope of her recovery. Her parents watched alternately by her bedside, their hearts full of anguish, and offering up many but silent prayers for the preservation of their darling child. Five mournful nights had passed in this manner, and now the sixth had arrived. The room in which Emily lay, was lighted only by the dim gleams of a night-lamp, and even before this was placed a large book, to prevent the glare from disturbing the invalid. In an arm-chair close beside the bed, the patient mother was seated, anxiously watching the slightest movement of the sick child. The mother's weary eyes were unrefreshed by sleep—such love and anxiety as a parent alone can feel kept her still awake.

As the town clock struck the midnight hour her husband entered the sick room. He noiselessly walked up, and inquired in a low voice, "Is there yet any change for the better?"

A sorrowful shake of the head was the only answer he received. She pointed to the poor child, who was tossing from side to side; her little cheeks burning with fever, and her breathing rapid, but difficult. For a few minutes the father looked at his child without speaking; then turning to his wife, he whispered, "Do go and take a little rest: it is my turn to watch now."

"No," answered Madame Werner, "I could not sleep even if I were to lie down; and I feel only more anxious when I am not beside my poor child."

"But remember your own health," returned her husband; "you cannot go on thus; and the end of it will be, that I shall have to nurse two invalids instead of one. Do follow my example."

"Never fear for me," said the mother. "Rest is more necessary for you than for me. You have to spend your days in laboring hard for us, and if your nights are passed in watching, you will soon be unable to work. Ah! these are

evil times indeed. The poor are obliged to do double their usual work, and incur double their ordinary fatigue, to meet the unjust demands that are made upon them. It is too bad that we should have so many soldiers quartered upon us. To-day, again, there are twenty Frenchmen assigned to us. They must have food, and how are we to provide it? But I should care little for this if only our precious Emily were out of danger. She, after all, is my chief anxiety."

"And mine, too," said Werner, with a deep sigh, while he again tried to persuade his wife to take some rest. But all was in vain; and she at length prevailed upon him to return to his bed. Gradually, however, in spite of her determination, the affectionate mother sank into a deep sleep: her head fell back on the arm-chair, and she forgot in peaceful slumber both her present and her expected troubles.

"Pray give me some drink," the sick child suddenly called out; but for once her request was not attended to—the over-wearied mother did not hear.

"Some drink, if you please," repeated Emily, in a louder voice. But still her mother did not move, and the poor little girl began to cry.

Just then the door opened, and her brother Augustus, a youth of about fourteen years of age, entered half-dressed.

“Gently, dear Emily,” he said in a soothing voice: “I will give you something to drink.” He took a cup of tea from the top of the night-lamp, where it was placed that it might keep warm for the child. But poor Emily, rendered peevish by her sufferings, was not satisfied. “I want mother to give it to me,” she said, half crying.

“Dear Emily,” her brother gently said, “mother cannot—she is asleep. See, poor mother is so tired—so very tired. She has watched by you for six nights, and even now she has not left you; she still sits in the arm-chair. Now drink.”

The child eagerly swallowed the tea, and then threw herself back on her little bed. Augustus sat down by her side, that he might be ready to get anything she might want.

“Will you sing to me?” asked Emily; and Augustus sang gently the favorite ballad that had often lulled them to sleep, when it was sung by their mother’s sweet voice; but sleep was far from poor Emily now; and at length, overpowered by the heat and the restlessness occa-

sioned by her disorder, she attempted to throw the clothes off the bed.

“O, Emily, you must not uncover yourself. You will catch cold and then you will be worse. Put your foot in bed again, and let me cover it up.” Then he carefully tucked the bedclothes round the little one, and for a few minutes she lay still; till, tormented with thirst, she begged him to give her some water. Augustus took the chill off the water over the lamp, and then gave it to her. In this manner the night passed away. The poor little girl could not sleep; and if she did shut her eyes for a few minutes, she suddenly opened them, and became fractious and restless.

Augustus was unwearied in rearranging the bedclothes, smoothing her pillow, giving her refreshment, and singing her favorite little song. Throughout the whole time their mother continued to sleep.

As the morning began to dawn, Emily became rather more calm; the fever in her cheeks gave place to a deadly paleness; her eyes remained shut for a longer time; she breathed more slowly and more heavily. Deep stillness now reigned in the sick-room; the night-lamp flickered unsteadily for some time, and at length

threatened to be totally extinguished; the morning breeze shook the shutters on the neighboring houses, and sighed and groaned in such a ghostly fashion, that the boy was quite uneasy. The chill of the morning air added to his discomfort, but still he did not forsake his post. With trembling lips he continued to sing in a low voice—

“Angels watch thee in thy sleep,
Gently close thine eyes;
Sleep, dear Emily; sweetly sleep;
Lullaby—oh lullaby!”

Whilst he was thus anxiously watching his little sister, as she lay still as death, her eyes closed, and her breathing hardly perceptible, the thought that perhaps they would never open again fell like a leaden weight on his heart. A deep melancholy overwhelmed him; his throat became parched, his brow flushed, and his mind agitated. At length, relieved by a flood of tears, he began to sob bitterly. Emily was a general favorite, and dearly loved by the whole family; she was always full of merri-ment and intelligence. There was an inexpressible charm in every word, every smile, every step, and every glance of the dear child. “And now,” thought Augustus, “will that little mouth

be silent forever? Shall we never see again the merry dimple enliven her tiny face? Will that blue eye never smile again? And must our darling Emily be laid in the dark coffin instead of her curtained cradle-bed?" Poor boy! he was very wretched as he thought of all these things.

His mother was roused from her slumbers by the clock striking five. "Alas!" she cried, very much alarmed, "what have I done? Unhappy mother, I have neglected my child!" She wrung her hands as she looked at the pale form that lay beside her.

"Dear mother," said Augustus, concealing his tears, "do not be alarmed. I have been here, and have taken care of Emily."

"Ah!" returned Madame Werner, still in great distress; "but have you been all the time? I cannot remember when I fell asleep; and if poor little Emily should have uncovered herself, and taken a chill, owing to my forgetfulness, what may be the consequences?"

But Augustus was able to relieve his mother from this anxiety, and she thankfully embraced her son.

"Your thoughtfulness," she said, "has saved me from much unhappiness, my dear boy. I

should, indeed, have been miserable had my little daughter taken injury through my inattention. Thank you, dear Augustus."

Augustus was delighted at having so relieved his mother's mind. "Ah, mother," he said, "have you not often watched for many a long night by my bedside? And how slight is the return that I have now been able to make to you, by watching a few hours over our dear Emily!"

Then leaving his parent, refreshed by her slumber, to attend to the duties of the sick-room, he went to finish dressing himself; and then labored to give every assistance in providing for the soldiers that were to be billeted upon them.

CHAPTER II.

THE BILLETING.

"I SHOULD like to be a soldier," said Robert, the youngest of the family, to his sister Bertha Werner, a little girl of nine years of age. She was engaged at the time in putting a white cloth on the long table, and preparing it for the soldier. "They get such capital dinners," resumed the boy. "Why, they get Sunday dinners every day. There is such a beautiful joint of roast veal in the kitchen that mother has got ready for them. It is as brown as a nut, and I cannot tell you half the good things I saw when I peeped in. I never saw such a large dish of salad before! There is nothing I like so much. I only hope Mr. Frenchman will leave some for me.

"And the new bread!" added Bertha. "How nice and white it looks; and five whole pounds of fresh butter! I am sure they ought to thank father and mother very much for spending such

a great deal of money, and taking so much trouble for them."

"Do you know," continued little Robert, "I saw a number of cream cheeses too? They must be very greedy if they can manage to eat all."

The two children were suddenly interrupted by a noise in the street.

"Here they come—here they come!" cried Bertha, as she looked out of the window. It was true they were coming; and very soon weapons clanked as the troop halted and grounded arms. Soon after, heavy footsteps were heard on the staircase. The children then ran away.

The strange soldiers now took possession of the apartment that was pointed out to them. They appeared quite at their ease; threw aside their knapsacks and muskets, their greatcoats and swords, without ceremony; and very soon the unbidden guests had visited every room in the house to which they could gain access, whistling, singing, and talking as if they were at home.

In the meantime the servant-girl and one of Werner's journeymen covered the table with the food which had been prepared for the soldiers. Robert was not quite free from envy as the

smoking soups, the roast veal, and the salad were carried past him. It fell to the lot of Augustus to assemble the scattered soldiers to their meal. He had some little knowledge of French, and he was therefore able to inform them in their own tongue that dinner was ready.

The soldiers were not slow to answer the summons; and as soon as Werner found, from the clatter of knives and plates, that they were occupied, he and his wife withdrew, with the children, into the sick-room, which for the time they were obliged to use as a sitting-room.

All at once they heard a great uproar among their guests. Their voices were so loud, and so deafening, that only by the terrible words with which they interlarded their speeches could it be distinguished that they were angry and infuriated. It seemed as if they were breaking the windows. Jugs and glasses were then thrown into the street, followed by still heavier articles. Werner hastily left the room; but his wife contented herself with looking out of the window to ascertain the cause of the tumult. It was a sad sight for the poor woman. Pots foaming with beer were hurled through the windows of the room occupied by the Frenchmen, accompanied every now and then

by huge pieces of cheese, joints of meat, and bowls of salad, while loaves of bread fell like mill-stones on the pavement. Poor Robert wept from mingled feelings of anger and grief as he recognized in the middle of the street, surrounded by the broken jugs and dishes, the veal that he had so much wished to taste, almost concealed by his favorite salad. The weeping maid ran out to endeavor, if possible, to save some of the good things, and was met by her master, who entered just in time to save his assistant from being kicked out of doors.

Such a scene was sufficient to have excited the best-tempered man. Both Werner and his assistant were exceedingly enraged. They clenched their fists, and would willingly have vented their anger upon the offenders. But they were wise enough to restrain themselves, seeing how vain it would be for two men to attack twenty, and those all armed with deadly weapons.

“Augustus,” at length Werner called out in an angry voice, “be quick; run to headquarters, and just tell how these rascals are behaving themselves. Beg some of the officers to come over immediately.”

Augustus obeyed. During his absence the

uproar became still greater, so that Werner and his people did not venture to show themselves. After some time, Augustus came back, quite out of breath, but—alone.

“How is this?” asked his father eagerly. “How is it that no officer has come back with you?”

“Ah, father,” answered Augustus, “it is useless to expect help from them. The only answer I could get to my complaint and urgent petition was this—‘They could not interfere with a troop of soldiers for such nonsense; the men had had a severe march, and they had a right to expect good entertainment after it.’ The gentleman then turned away, and would not listen to anything farther that I had to say. And, father, what do you think I have seen besides?—it is quite terrible! A great number of Rhenish soldiers have just entered the town—Bader street is full of them. A number of loaves had been divided amongst them, that they might have something to eat till they could be billeted. And what do you think these wicked men were doing? They had laid the loaves in a row along the dirty street, and were walking on them, laughing as they went, for they said that was the way to keep their

boots clean. Some of the men even took all the crumb of the loaves away, and putting their feet into them, they then walked about in the mud. How impious to misuse the gifts of God in this way!"

The parents and children stood amazed at this narration. At last Werner said, "Well, if our own countrymen act in this manner, we cannot be surprised that foreigners should behave no better."

"Right enough," added his wife; "therefore, dear husband, be calm, and let us make the best of it. Shall we go and ask what the Frenchmen have to complain of in the food that we have prepared for them? It is better that we should come to an understanding with them, than that they should ill-treat us, and destroy everything. It seems as if, in the midst of all this trouble, God was about to gladden our hearts. Just look at our dear little Emily; what a change there is in her for the better! She sleeps now quite soundly and peacefully. She breathes softly, and that fearful restlessness has entirely disappeared. The doctor, too, gives us hope of seeing her restored. He says that the dear child has got over the worst, and that there is little danger now. We must only take

care that she is not suddenly roused out of this sleep. Is not this news worth a thousandfold more than the few crowns that you are compelled to waste upon these covetous strangers?"

"You are right, my love," said her husband as he stepped up to the couch of his child, and thankfully watched her peaceful slumbers. With a cheerful face he then took a further sum from his hardly-earned savings, in order to purchase more wine, meal, and bread, that he might be able to pacify his discontented guests.

Just then a new trouble came. The maid announced another arrival of soldiers, and at the same minute the yard was filled with these unwelcome visitors.

"A drummer, with fifteen men, from the Rhenish troops, have come here for quarters," said the girl, as with a trembling hand she gave the quartering billet to her horrified master.

His poor wife clasped her hands. "Alas! have we not yet trouble enough? Must we still endure fresh misfortunes?"

But it was no use lamenting; something must be quickly arranged, for the German soldiers were impatient to occupy their apartment.

"Show them into the workshop," Werner or-

dered, after a little consideration. "I had rather give the workmen a holiday than that the life of my sick child should be endangered."

In the meantime his wife desired Bertha and Robert to take care of Emily, whilst she hurried into the kitchen to make a few hasty preparations for the entertainment of the newcomers.

While engaged in her household cares, she heard the approach of heavy footsteps and the sound of angry voices. She listened: it was evident to her that the soldiers were pressing into the sick-room. She listened no longer, but like an arrow she rushed out to protect her beloved child. Led by the drummer, the soldiers had noisily entered the sick-room just as she reached the door. As soon as the drummer perceived her, he said in a rude voice, "Do you fools imagine us to be dogs, that you may push into any hole you please? I can tell you you are just wrong there. A pretty thing indeed! The French are to have the best room, while we Germans are to be put off with the workshop! Or, forsooth, if we are not satisfied with that we may sit down in the yard! What! are those good-for-nothing fellows to be treated better

than we are? Did not we shed our blood for you in battle? A fine return you are making us! I'll tell you what, comrades, we will remain here; and, welcome or not, they shall not drive us out."

"Oh, good people," implored the poor mother in a, suppressed but earnest voice, "have mercy upon my sick child! This is the first time for six days that she has slept quietly. I beseech you to keep still, and we will do all you wish. Is there not a father among you who can understand and feel for me? Have none of you left a dear little child at home that you would like to see? Oh, I do not think that you will kill my darling!"

While she was thus speaking, her trembling hands were employed in relieving the soldiers of their weapons and knapsacks, and placing them as noiselessly as possible in a corner of the room. She then repeated her request, that they would spare the sick child; desired the two little watchers not to forsake their post; and then hastened back into the kitchen.

For some time the soldiers remained tolerably quiet. They placed chairs at the large table, and conversed with each other. At length, however, the fierce drummer became impatient;

he thought the dinner ought to make its appearance. For a short time he contented himself with muttering between his teeth, but he soon broke out into loud expressions of anger.

“What are these lazy folks doing, that they don’t bring us something to eat? I suppose they have been busy picking up what was thrown into the streets, that they may dish it up again, and set it before us. I suspected the cross-grained old woman as soon as they thrust us into that hole of a shop. Stay: I’ll hasten her a bit. It’s very well I know her weak side.”

As he said this, he cast a wrathful glance at the innocent child, who still lay in a sweet sleep, notwithstanding his loud talking. Bertha and Robert stood beside the sick-bed like two guardian angels. They watched the angry soldier with timid looks as they noticed the mischief that lightened out of his gray eyes. Both of the children turned pale as they saw him push his chair close to Emily’s couch, and then lay hold of the drum. Fear deprived them of power of utterance; but they folded their slender arms as well as they could over the little sleeper, and their terrified looks implored mercy from the barbarian. But the drummer either could not

or would not understand this silent but eloquent language of the eyes. With a diabolical smile he placed the drum between his legs, and raising the drumsticks, he said deridingly, "It won't quite kill the innocent if I do help her mother on her legs."

Those who read this narrative will be ready to suppose that what I am now about to relate is mere fiction. Would that it were so! But alas! it is too true. It is one amongst many of the horrors occasioned by war.

Little Emily continued to slumber peacefully, though the wretch was watching her. Her tiny hands were folded over her breast. She breathed softly through her parted lips; and returning health had recalled a tinge of rose-color to her cheeks. The luxuriant curls fell around her face. All this the fierce stranger saw; he saw, too, those loving eyes that gazed imploringly in inexpressible agony; and yet this did not restrain his ruthless hands from beating a thundering tattoo on the drum. A cry of agony burst from the lips of the brother and sister as the drum sounded. Poor little Emily appeared almost convulsed. She opened wide her blue eyes, and gazed with alarm at the strange fierce man whose hands had called forth

those fearful tones. The blood forsook her face: and the struggles of death began. At that moment the door opened, and, like a lioness robbed of her young, the poor mother rushed into the room. Her senses seemed leaving her; a deadly paleness overspread her countenance; her hair hung loose; and her eye rolled wildly. But she was unable to utter a sound. She seized the drummer, and her strength appeared almost superhuman; for the man, strong and athletic as he was, could not release himself from her murderous grasp. But at that moment she glanced at her child—the dying Emily. She let the wretch go, and raised the panting child from the bed, that she might have air. The hot tears fell upon the now fixed face of her darling; she kissed the cold blue lips; she called the little one by all her most endearing names; but in vain—life was too far gone, and in a few minutes poor Emily breathed her last. Madame Werner, overwhelmed with grief, clasped the lifeless remains of her child to her bosom, and with a heart-rending cry sank unconscious upon the floor. The drummer fell also, thrust through by the father's hand. Werner had entered the room soon after his wife, and in this manner

had punished the murderer. The soldiers closed round, and at length managed to disarm and overpower him. They then bound him, and took him away as a prisoner.

CHAPTER III.

THE AFFECTIONATE SON.

THREE days after the occurrences had taken place which were narrated in the last chapter, a man was observed to come out of Mr. Werner's door at a very early hour. He was habited in a large black mourning-cloak, which fell over a little coffin that he carried before him, supported by a broad band that passed around the wearer's neck. A woman followed him, dressed in deep mourning, with a white hood over her head. She was the sextoness. Lastly came Werner's three children — Augustus, Bertha, and Robert. Their eyes were red and swollen, and they wept bitterly as they passed along. The little procession of mourners went quietly through the almost empty streets towards a distant burying-ground. At its approach the gate was swung open with a sound that jarred upon their ears. But as they entered the solemn abode of the dead, their feelings were at once soothed and solemnized by the soft rays of the

rising sun shining upon the tomb-stones with which the ground was covered.

Threading their way between the numberless graves, the mourners directed their steps to one that had just been opened; and here the bearer deposited the little coffin. The ceremony of interment then proceeded amid the loud sobs of the three children, whose grief at the loss of Emily was probably increased by a recollection of the condition of their father and mother — one in a prison on a charge of murder, the other confined to bed with distress of body and mind.

For several days nothing could be heard of the fate of Werner. Perhaps the necessity for stirring herself to take charge of her family caused Madame Werner to rise from bed sooner than she would otherwise have done. Fortunately the weather was fine, and she was able to sit in an easy chair outside the door, where she was dutifully attended to by Augustus; and even Watch, the house-dog, was faithfully at his post beside her.

Meanwhile Augustus was maturing a plan for the delivery of his father, who, it was reported, was to be shot by the military. One day Bertha asked him what he was thinking

so deeply about? He replied by asking her "what was the verse the clergyman discoursed from last Sunday?"

Bertha considered for a moment, and then said, "It was, 'Ye ought also to lay down your lives for the brethren.'"

"That is right," said Augustus. "Don't you understand it? We are to 'lay down our lives for our brethren!' How much more, then, for our parents?" He stopped for a few minutes, apparently striving to overcome some conflicting feelings; then he added calmly, "Robert, you may have both my turtle-doves for your own; but take care of them, and do not forget to give them fresh water and proper food every day. There is a large paper bag in my box full of food that will last you for some time. You know where to find it?"

"What!" cried Robert, "will you indeed give me your doves? — your favorite doves?"

"I do not care for them now," returned Augustus sorrowfully. "Dear Emily is dead; and our father, they say, will be shot to-morrow! I do not want the doves." Then, after a short pause, "If mother gets well, and father is set free, tell them not to be angry with me. It would not be right to act differently; the

Bible says so. And, Bertha, repeat the verse to them; you know which I mean? Then they will understand it, and will not be angry with me."

The children did not know what Augustus meant; nor was he disposed to explain himself farther. An idea had awakened in his mind, and he felt that he had a duty to perform. He resolved that he would try to save his father's life, by giving up his own. He did not allow himself to think. In a fit of enthusiasm he went off to the prison to see his father, if possible, for the last time.

"Stand back!" said the sentry, as Augustus approached the entrance of the prison in which Werner was confined.

"My father is here," said Augustus; "may I not go in to see him?"

"I tell you to stand back," said the sentry in a harsh voice.

"Oh let me see him, if only for a moment!" implored the boy, while he could no longer restrain his tears; "let me go in; I want to bid him good-by."

"Stand back!" repeated the stern soldier. "What good will your visit do him? A flask of wine now would be of much more use than

your whimpering and whining. Some wine would give him a little spirit to stand fire; but your seeing him would take away the little bit of courage he has left."

In the meantime several of the inhabitants had gathered round to hear what was passing. Murmuring voices were heard to exclaim, "Shameful—shameful! not to suffer the poor child to embrace his father once more."

"Ah," said one, "if I had been in Werner's place, I would have done just the same."

"Let's have a throw at the hard-hearted rascal!" said another.

"Knock him down—the knave!" said a third.

The soldier became rather uneasy as he found the crowd rapidly increasing round him; and at length he said in a milder voice, "My orders are very strict that no one is to see the prisoner. If the boy wishes to see his father, let him obtain permission from the colonel, and there will then be no difficulty."

Accordingly Augustus, followed by the crowd, went to head-quarters, which were distinguished by two sentries being in attendance. The townsmen, full of curiosity to see what would be the end of the matter, remained before the

house, while Augustus entered. He was shown into a large room full of officers. Divided into groups, they were engaged in animated conversation. No notice was taken of the poor boy by any one, and he tried in vain to discover which was the colonel. Suddenly a side door opened. The officers drew back, and silently arranged themselves round. An officer, evidently of superior rank, and adorned with a great many orders, big, burly, and red-faced in appearance, entered.

Augustus turned pale as he found himself standing alone in the circle, and facing the formidable colonel. Still, he summoned up all his courage ; and stepping rather nearer, he said in a firm voice, "Oh, sir, the Bible says we ought to die for our brethren ! So will you let me be shot instead of my poor father ?"

The colonel, astonished at this unexpected request, stepped back. Measuring the boy from head to foot, he cried, "How ? What ? You wish to be shot ? Nonsense !" he continued, laughing. "What do you mean, you foolish boy ?"

"Oh, sir," returned Augustus, while the tears ran down his pale cheeks ; "I do, indeed, mean

what I say ; I am, indeed, come to beg you to kill me instead of my dear father."

The colonel now became serious. He listened attentively as the poor boy described in the most touching manner the trouble and agony of his parents. Both the colonel and his officers were indignant and ashamed when they heard of the conduct of the inhuman drummer.

When the interesting story was finished, the colonel was gloomy and silent for a few moments ; then addressing the circle round, he said, "This is a peculiar case, and one very hard to deal with. It would be a bad precedent if I were to let the boy's father off. For the safety of our people, it is necessary that such a deed should not go unpunished. But if a court-martial should be held, Werner will surely be condemned to die, especially if the drummer should not recover ; and I find there is little hope that he will. On the other hand, we would gladly save the man, were it only for the sake of his noble boy. There is not time enough to apply for pardon from his majesty. In two days the regiment must march, and the drummer's place be supplied. Stay—an idea occurs to me." He turned to Augustus, who stood trembling to hear the sentence that was

to decide upon life and death. "Now, my boy," asked the colonel, "have you fully made up your mind to die for your father? Remember it is easier to say this than to do it. You might tell a different tale if you felt the cold leaden bullets cracking your bones for you." Here he looked sharply at Augustus, who evinced by his manner that his determination remained unaltered. "Supposing," continued the colonel, "that the man whom your father has wounded should not die before the regiment marches, I can perhaps save your father from being shot. But in that case you must take the vacant place of the sick drummer in my regiment, and march away with us in two days. Will you, and dare you do this?"

"Must I become a drummer?" cried Augustus, clasping his hands in agony. "Oh! anything in the world but that! I should never dare to appear before my mother again. She would hate me. It was a drummer who killed dear Emily. Oh no! no!—indeed I cannot be a drummer!"

The colonel was almost angry. "Did one ever hear of such a boy?" he said. "I want to do him a kindness, and he does not so much as thank me for it. Listen, you foolish little

fellow! I did not think you were so stupid. If you suffer yourself to be shot, you most assuredly will never see your mother again. But if you take to the drum and the uniform, you are as much her son as ever. Do you suppose your father would ever be happy again, or thank you for his life, if he gained it by your death?"

"Oh, sir," said poor Augustus in great distress, "I will do anything to save my dear father. If I cannot be shot, I will even become a drummer!"

The colonel and his officers could scarcely keep from laughing at the boy's speech, but the former merely said in reply, "Then we are agreed; only you must understand that these are the conditions: In the first place, your father cannot be set at liberty until the drummer is out of danger, and our regiment has marched away from this place. Secondly, you must not see or speak to your father again. I have the best reason possible for requiring this. Why should you have the pain of taking leave, when there is no occasion for it? You will therefore remain here. I give you in charge to my old sergeant, Hoier, who will stand in place of father to you. Take care, and drum away

industriously for the two days that we remain here, so that you may not fall out with the other drummers."

The thanks Augustus would have uttered died upon his lips. He could not bear the idea of taking the place of the cruel drummer who had murdered his sister. Indeed, with his present feelings, he would rather that they had taken him at his word, and suffered him at once to die for his father.

CHAPTER IV.

AUGUSTUS A DRUMMER.

AUGUSTUS drummed away till his arms ached. He gave, in general, great satisfaction to his instructor. But occasionally the latter was obliged to remind him, by a gentle tap on the shoulders with the drumstick, that he could not practice well if he was so lost in thought. The poor boy would then pass the sleeve of his soldier's coat over his tearful eyes, and drum away again in real earnest.

When he accomplished the first tattoo, a feeling of horror ran through his frame. He thought of his murdered sister, and of his poor mother now lying at the point of death. At length the dreaded morning arrived on which Augustus was to march off with the regiment.

The old sergeant had taken an early opportunity of giving Augustus a lesson in packing his knapsack in the most judicious manner. The boy listened to all his directions, but scarcely understood them. His head was even

fuller than the knapsack which he was to carry. Suddenly the sounds of the general march were heard in the street. As Augustus was a novice in the art of drumming, and the colonel wished to avoid a scene, orders were given that he should not just then drum with his companions. He accordingly left his quarters, walking by Hoier's side instead of his proper place. His heart seemed ready to break as he passed his father's house. His little sister and brother, Bertha and Robert, the maid-servant, and his father's workmen, were all looking out to catch sight of him as he passed. But the window of the room which his mother occupied was closed completely, and a thick curtain drawn down. Augustus could not restrain his tears. Raising his hands towards them, he called out in a loud, though trembling voice, "Bid my mother and father good-by for me! Good-by! good-by!"

"Augustus, Augustus, wait a moment!" and their heads disappeared from the window. They were evidently coming down stairs, that the children might have a last kiss of their brother. But Hoier disappointed them, for he drew his young charge away as quickly as possible.

"Silly creatures," he muttered between his teeth, not without evident emotion; "why

should they make your ^{*}trouble still harder to bear? Come, my boy, march on!"

They hastened to the market-place, where the regiment was drawn up. As they passed along, they often heard the remark: "There goes Werner's boy, Augustus. He is a dutiful son. He has become a soldier to save his poor father's life."

"Farewell, you brave fellow!" a great many voices added as he was lost to their sight amid the crowd of his new comrades.

An order was now given for all the drummers to place themselves at the head of the regiment. They immediately hastened to the appointed spot, with the exception of Augustus, who, according to the general's orders, remained behind. Crowds of spectators were assembled, the greater part of whom were children. But all appeared to be looking for the same object: "Augustus Werner, where was he? What a noble boy! what a grateful child, to act such a part!" But for some time so hidden was he, that their friendly eyes could not discover him. All at once the crowd opened, and several persons made their way quickly towards the soldiers. These were Werner's workmen, the maid-servant, and the brother and sister of

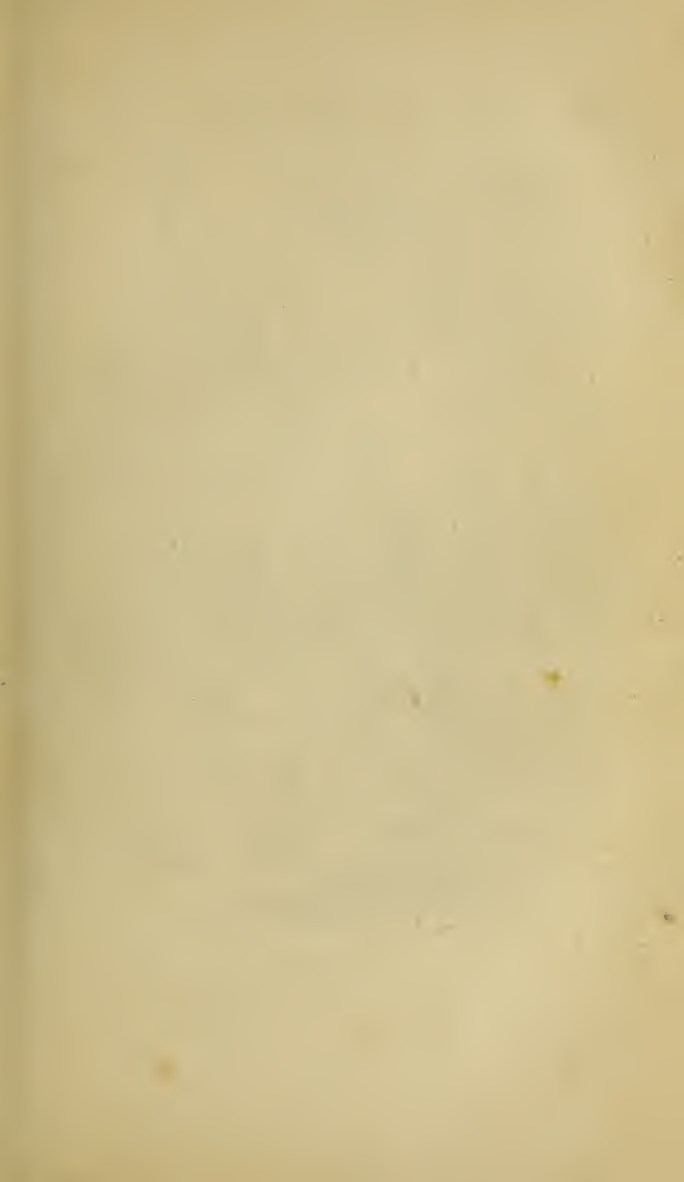
Augustus. They had succeeded in finding him out; and the two children almost overpowered him with their weeping caresses. None of the party could speak, for old and young were weeping together at this affecting scene. Poor Augustus pressed his little brother and sister to him; and this hasty embrace was all he could enjoy, for just then came the command in tones of thunder from the commanding officer, "Forward! march!" The drummers made a tremendous noise. Augustus was torn forcibly from his beloved ones, and obliged to follow the soldiers. He then arranged his drum also, and joining vigorously in the tumult, he strove to drum away his painful thoughts. But this was not a very easy matter. He walked and drummed mechanically by the side of his comrades till they had marched a long way out of the city. Here they came to a hill, where the regiment made a short halt. The soldiers drew out their flasks of brandy, which they handed from one to the other, whilst they seasoned their fiery draught with their rough jests.

"Drink, comrade, drink!" said Augustus' next neighbor, offering him his flask. "Nothing like a good taste of brandy to make us forget our sorrows. Take a drink, then, my boy."

But Augustus silently refused the offer, and once more turned his eyes towards his beloved native place. There the town lay, rejoicing in the clear beams of the morning sun ; the beautiful sight only increased the boy's sadness. "Ah!" thought he, "shall I ever see it again ; or if I do return, will it not be as a helpless cripple ? Shall I ever more see my dear father and mother ? Oh that I had been allowed to bid them good-by ! My own dear home ! I never loved it so much as now that I am obliged to leave it. Farewell forever ! May God protect you, beloved ones !" He kept his sad thoughts to himself, however, for he was not proof against the raillery of his companions. They talked and joked with each other more as if they were proceeding to a feast than to war ; and yet most of them had left loving parents at home, who trembled and prayed for their children's safety.

The larks, too, sang joyously in the blue sky, as if they were striving to dispel his grief. Their simple warbling did more than anything else towards enabling him to overcome his feelings. He thought of the God who had made these little creatures ; and he remembered that as they were cared for by his Almighty Father,

so was he also. These soothing reflections brought peace and happiness once more into his heart, and his youthful face began to lose the careworn expression which it had borne for some days past. By the time his comrades were ready to pursue their march, he was even more merry and cheerful than those who had had recourse to their constant companions — the brandy flasks.





A Soldier's Life.

The Little German Drummer-Boy, p. 45.

CHAPTER V.

A SOLDIER'S LIFE.

AUGUSTUS heard his companions sing; but he did not quite agree with them either in the sentiments or the manner of their songs. Besides, he was fatigued and down-hearted. He was so unaccustomed to carry the knapsack, that the burden caused him much discomfort. His back and shoulders ached violently from the unusual weight. It was bad enough for him who had only the drum in addition to carry; but still he was not so badly off as the other soldiers; they had their heavy guns with them, and were obliged to rest them on their shoulders. Then another annoyance was the cloud of dust which harassed the regiment as it marched along the roads. Indeed to such a height did this inconvenience arise, that the soldiers' uniforms looked as if they had been well powdered. Instead of inhaling the fresh air, their mouths and noses were filled with dust, which parched

the throat and tongue. It is true they sometimes passed by refreshing springs, but they were seldom permitted to enjoy the cooling beverage. A few only were allowed to step out of the ranks when it was necessary to fill the flasks; but the greater number of the thirsty soldiers were obliged to pass them by.

Bathed in perspiration, racked with aches and pains, weary, and out of spirits, Augustus and his comrades at length arrived at the village in which it was arranged they should dine. Augustus had not eaten a morsel that day, and it was now one o'clock. Hungry as he was, he had still to wait a full half hour, until the troops had been called over and billeted upon the different houses in the village. Their arrival had been expected, and preparations had therefore been made for their reception. Augustus and twenty of his companions had scarcely entered the room, before the smoking meal made its appearance. The table was quickly covered; plates, spoons, knives, and forks, lay ready; huge loaves of bread, butter, and cheese, had been amply provided; nor were brandy and beer wanting. One end of the table was adorned with an immense dish of dumplings, while the other supported a dish of boiled pork. After

the soldiers had thrown aside their arms and knapsacks, they took their seats around the table. The peasant and his wife, their children and the little servant girl, stood behind the strangers, waiting to attend upon them.

The family group uncovered their heads, expecting to hear the soldiers ask a blessing on the food that was before them; but they waited in vain. Augustus was the only one of the whole party who bent his head to repeat the few words of thanksgiving that had never been neglected at his dear father's table. And now a terrible tumult began. Augustus' comrades swore fearfully at the puddings and the meat; the former, they said, were as hard as stones; the latter as tough and tasteless as leather. Some compared them to cannon-balls, and threatened to send them at the heads of those who had been concerned in making them. In vain the poor woman pleaded that it was not her fault; the dinner had been ready for two hours, and as a natural consequence, the puddings had become heavy. It was with difficulty the discontented guests could be restrained from adding violent actions to their violent words. During this altercation Augustus quietly, and without complaining, took his portion of the

unsavory food. He willingly left his share of the brandy to his companions; but he rejoiced at the prospect of a refreshing draught of pure water. Many took beer, which happened to be sour, and tasted of the cask. This discovery increased the general discontent.

"Gentlemen," said the peasant, on seeing their angry looks as they tasted the nauseous beverage, "we have nothing but such beer as this to drink throughout the summer, and we have paid for it as good. You must not be angry with us, but with our landlord, who requires us to buy it of him."

"You may think it a fortunate thing for yourselves," returned a soldier, "that we are Germans instead of Frenchmen. They would have thrown your beer in your faces, and made you get wine for them."

"Those who have no wine can't give any," returned the peasant; "and where there is nothing, the emperor himself would ask without getting."

No sooner had they pretty well cleared the table, (which they accomplished in spite of their discontented speeches,) than the soldiers started up, and began exploring in all directions. Some found their way into the dairy, where

they scrupled not to drink off the cream; others visited the hen-house and the dove-cot; another party ran over the garden, attracted by the cherry-trees, that were heavily laden with fruit; while some did not disdain to pay an inquiring visit to the cheese-baskets, that were placed at a height from the ground. Augustus, in the meantime, remained behind in the sitting-room. When he found himself alone at the table, melancholy again overpowered him. The thought of his parents recurred to him with redoubled bitterness. What might have happened to them by this time? He leaned his head upon his hands, and for a time forgot all around him. But he was recalled to consciousness by hearing the angry complaints of the peasant, who was in the court-yard, loudly remonstrating against the depredations that were going on on all sides.

Augustus was heartily ashamed of the behaviour of his comrades. Just as he was in the act of going out, to endeavor to expostulate with them, he heard a child cry behind the stove. He went to the place from whence the sound proceeded, and found a child lying in a cradle. The little one reminded him of his dead sister, and drove all other thoughts out of

his head. He took the weeping child from her little bed, and endeavored to divert her attention. At first she appeared inclined to cry still louder at the sight of a stranger's face; but Augustus spoke so gently and kindly, that her fear gave way to confidence in her new nurse. She stared at him with eyes wide open, and at length began to play with his *épaulettes*. Augustus, for the first time since he left home, felt perfectly happy. He sang his prettiest songs to the child, and danced with it about the room. In the midst of all this the mother entered. As she saw the occupation of the drummer, the discontented and angry expression of her face changed to one of kindness and pleasure.

"You seem to me the only lamb among all those wolves," said she. "I thought as much when I saw you ask God's blessing on the food, and behave so quietly and decently at dinner. Only see the little thing how pleased she is to be danced by the young lad! Sure you have some little sisters like her at home — haven't you?"

"I had one," answered Augustus, very much distressed; "but the soldier whose place I have taken killed her with his drum."

"Killed her with his drum!" repeated the woman in surprise. "How could that be? Tell me then."

As Augustus was about to comply with her wish, the drum was heard in the distance.

"There's the summons to march," said he hastily. "I must go, and drum with my comrades."

"Wait just another moment," said his hostess, quickly leaving the room. She soon came back with a dish of beautiful cherries. "You will like them all the better, my boy," added she, "because they are honorably gained." She filled his pockets and cap with them, then relieved him of her child, and bade him a friendly farewell.

Happy, because at peace with himself, Augustus now joined his companions, and made his drum no less noisy than theirs. They were soon again marching at the head of the regiment. Again they had to endure intense heat, thirst, and fatigue; and most valuable was the gift of cherries to poor Augustus. He was very sparing in his enjoyment of them, and managed to make this delicious refreshment last until the evening, when they arrived at a town in which they were to be quartered for the night.

The troops rejoiced at the thought of a good supper and a comfortable bed after the toils and fatigues of the day. They could hardly wait until they were informed on what houses they were billeted ; and amidst much laughing and talking they found their way to their several quarters.

While the supper was preparing, the men employed themselves in brushing their uniforms, and cleaning their muskets and swords ; they refreshed themselves by shaving, and washing their hands and faces. Several, on opening their knapsacks, produced articles that they had appropriated to themselves at the village in which they had rested at mid-day. One ran into the kitchen with half-a-dozen eggs, which he desired should form an omelet for his own eating ; another produced a pair of dead pigeons ; a third a hen ; these they decided to have cooked for the following day. A fourth, with a shout of triumph, now drew forth a headless goose, with which he excited the envy of his less fortunate companions.

“ Ah ! ” said he, holding up the body, “ this old fellow thought to frighten me away by his gabbling, as I crept through the garden pales ; he hissed at me horribly ; but, thinks I to

myself, 'My fine fellow, you will just suit me;' and I gave him a cut across his long neck, that soon finished him. The bird is fat enough, at least, so I expect from the weight." The poor goose was then taken into the kitchen to be roasted with his companions.

The inn-keeper had done his utmost to please them. The various eatables that were placed on the table smelt so savory, the salad looked so fresh and green, the beer was so foaming and clear, that the men for once sat down quite inclined to be pleased with all that was placed before them. But it seemed they were doomed to disappointment. Scarcely had they finished the first spoonful of a delicious soup, before the door was hastily thrown open, and a young officer entered, his accoutrements clanging at every step he took.

"Drummer!" he commanded, "quick, beat the march!"

These few words sufficed to change the soldiers into statues. Their hands sank on the table as they stood aghast at the unwelcome messenger.

Hoier, the sergeant, was the first to recover himself, so as to be able to say, "Do you really mean, sir, that the men are not to break their

fast after such a severe march as this has been ? ”

“ I am not in the habit of joking with my inferiors,” returned the lieutenant disdainfully; “ it is beneath me; you will please to remember *that* for the future ; and also that it is usual, in speaking to your officers, to rise from your seat. One would have supposed you would have had time to learn that before this, instead of giving your comrades such an example. The rascals appear to have profited pretty well by it, sitting there like stocks in my presence. By the powers ! I’ll teach you what is due to those above you ! ”

Like puppets touched by a wire the soldiers now rose from their seats, Hoier at their head. The sergeant swallowed without a reply the rude speeches of the lieutenant, though he was old and experienced enough to be his father. He stood quite calm and erect without a trace of anger on his face, except that it was rather paler than usual. When the officer had finished speaking, he merely inquired respectfully, “ Sir, may not the people at least finish their supper first ? ”

“ No ! ” returned the lieutenant ; “ it is intended

for the French, who have just arrived. We are to give place to them. I shall remain here to see that nothing is removed."

The soldiers left the table with very long faces, and prepared to march. In the meantime the master of the goose endeavored to escape unobserved into the kitchen, that he might at any rate secure his booty.

"Where are you off to?" called out the officer, whose sharp sight nothing could escape.

"In — to — the — kitchen," stammered the other. "I only wanted" —

"Stay in the room," commanded the lieutenant. He now perceived that Augustus was still present, and with a muttered curse he added, "Unless you find your legs pretty quickly, you won't be here long;" and so saying he drew his sabre half out of its sheath. Augustus, however, was too quick for him; he rushed through the door, and joined his companions. They did not fail to discuss the conduct of the young officer. It was plain enough, they all agreed, that the lieutenant had as yet made no campaign, or he would have learned better than to bluster after that fashion. He had better take care — he would not be the first officer who, in

the confusion of a battle, had been shot by one of his own people.

The village to which the Rhenish troops had to find their way that evening for their night's quarters lay a good hour's march from the town. Who could wonder that they indulged in murmurings and complainings as they passed along? More especially as a violent storm overtook them, and drenched them completely through. The consequence was, that the poor people who could only offer them scanty fare and straw-beds, had to suffer a great deal from them.

As Augustus walked beside his comrades, he thought of the song he had so often heard them sing —

“ It is a right joyous thing a soldier to be ! ”

His own experience, short as it had been, had led him to a very different conclusion. What had vexed him the most was the ill treatment his kind friend the sergeant had been compelled to bear from the young and haughty lieutenant. And when he compared his present condition with what it had been a few days previous, how painful was the contrast ! But Augustus, young

as he was, had learned one useful lesson — that it was unwise and useless to spend his time in vain regrets and lamentations. He repeated his usual prayer before retiring to rest ; and, hard as his couch was, the weary boy was soon wrapt in a peaceful and refreshing slumber.

CHAPTER VI.

HARDSHIPS.

AUGUSTUS had at first imagined that he never could bear the hardships of a soldier's life for any length of time; but he was mistaken. Every day his knapsack annoyed him less and less; he did not feel so weary after a lengthened march; and he found the heat and dust easier to endure. He could now sleep as well on a bundle of straw or hay as he formerly did in a feather-bed; and every morning, even though he had had but a short rest, he felt his strength and spirits invigorated. The fact of his passing so much of his time in the open air, and taking continual exercise, had the best possible effect on his health. He felt happy without knowing why. He was a general favorite with his comrades, and he began to feel a great attachment to them. It was evident to him that many of their unkind actions proceeded rather from thoughtlessness and extravagance than from

cruelty of disposition. He was most distressed at the dreadful oaths that he heard constantly around him. Every one seemed ashamed to pray to God, but none were ashamed to curse and swear. The slightest and most trifling annoyances would lead them to appeal in the most terrible way to the Almighty. For some time Augustus kept silence; but as he became better acquainted with his comrades, he ventured cautiously and gently to reprove them.

One day one of the soldiers, in brushing his uniform, knocked off a button. This trifling circumstance caused him to utter as usual a volley of bitter imprecations. "Oh!" said Augustus, unable to contain himself, "how can you speak so wickedly? Suppose God were to grant your prayer, you would be lost forever; just because a trumpery button happened to make you angry."

The man looked up with surprise. "You silly boy, who would imagine such a thing?"

"Did you not ask it yourself, just now?" inquired Augustus.

"Nonsense!" returned the man; "of course I did not mean what I said; I was only joking."

"Do you recollect," asked Augustus, "how

angry the lieutenant was because Sergeant Hoier supposed he was joking with him? He said he thought joking quite beneath him, especially with inferiors; though, after all, there is not such a very great difference between him and Hoier. You take care never to joke with your loaded musket; and surely you will not dare to joke with the Most High, or with the most dreadful of all evils that could happen to you? Oh it is horrible to think of such a thing!"

The soldier appeared to ridicule the boy's reproof; but he took care for the future, if not totally to abstain from such shocking oaths, at any rate not to utter them in the presence of his little Mentor. Indeed, Augustus exercised a good influence over most of his companions. He was never heard to murmur at fatigue, the weather, common fare, a hard bed, or any of the hardships they had to endure; he was never seen ill-treating the peasantry, or appropriating the possessions of others to himself.

He had at first gained the regard of the troops by his self-denying love to his father; and this esteem had subsequently been increased by his exemplary conduct. In addition to this, the favor with which the colonel and Sergeant

Hoier regarded him raised him in the estimation of the company.

As soon as he could find time and opportunity, he wrote the following letter to his father : —

“MY BELOVED FATHER — Our good colonel has had the kindness to assure me that the wicked drummer has recovered from his wound, and is on his way to join his regiment. I trust that you have therefore long ere this been set free. Oh how glad I am to think of it! I only hope dear mother is well again, and does not feel so miserable about our Emily's death. Do not be anxious or uncomfortable about me; I am very well, and have not been in want of anything. The colonel is a very kind protector to me; and as to Sergeant Hoier, he is like a second father. Indeed a soldier's life is not nearly so miserable as we all imagined. We have not yet had a glimpse of the enemy, for at present we are only in Poland. When we reach Russia we may expect to encounter them. But do not fear for me then. Our sergeant says, ‘it is not every ball that finds its man; and they shoot right over the heads of such little fellows as I am.’ Poland seems to me like a land of

pigs. I do not speak of the cities, but only of the villages. Only fancy, you never find a chimney in the peasants' cottages! So that the room is always full of stifling smoke; for it is not to be supposed that it can get clearly out of the little air-holes they have in the walls. The manure is not taken out into the fields, but is left in a heap close by the house, and there gives out a horrible stench. These dunghills are the favorite spots for the children to play on, and you may see numbers of them sitting and amusing themselves there, just like pigs. One can hardly look at them — the children, their parents, or the servants — without disgust. They never seem to think of washing themselves. How surprised the French will be when they follow us to these quarters! I had much rather bivouac in the open air, which we have often done. We wrap ourselves in our cloaks, lay our heads on our knapsacks; the beautiful blue sky, with its shining stars for our curtains; and the fresh morning air our alarum. The latter does its work so thoroughly, that when it comes we are obliged to get up, and take a little brandy for fear of catching the ague. This is the only dram I take in the day, and I cannot help it, because we have no coffee.

My comrades laugh at me because I will not smoke. I know, dear father, you will be glad that I do not accustom myself to it, and also that I do not swear. I do not forget to say the prayers my dear mother taught me every night and morning ; but we never go to church.

“ It will be very long before I shall be able to get my discharge, for the colonel says in a short time they will want as many men as they can get. I have therefore quite made up my mind to it. I should so like to know how all goes on at home ; but there is scarcely any likelihood of a letter reaching me, because we keep moving from one place to another. And now, dear father, I must conclude. Give dear mother, Bertha, and Robert a hundred kisses for me ; and give my love to our good Anna and the workmen. I will write again as soon as I can. Till then good-by, dear father. Your loving child,

AUGUSTUS.

This letter gave unspeakable delight to every member of Werner's family. The parents first shed tears of joy at the thought that they were blessed with such a kind and affectionate son ; these were succeeded by tears of sorrow that he was taken from them. His little brother and

sister jumped about, and clapped their hands for joy ; Anna smiled with pleasure that she had been thought of by her young master ; and the workmen said, “ It was just what might have been expected from him—he was too kind and thoughtful to forget any one.” The letter traveled through the whole town, for all were interested in the self-denying son. His father made up his mind to travel after the army, and purchase the discharge of Augustus at any cost ; and it was only by the expostulations of his friends — who represented to him the uselessness of such a step, and the weak and defenceless condition in which his family would be left in his absence during a time of disturbance and war — that he was prevented from executing his design.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GRAND ARMY.

IT was in the summer of the year 1812 that the French army crossed the Russian frontier. Never had its equal been seen in number or in the completeness of its equipments. It amounted to upwards of 500,000 foot soldiers, 80,000 cavalry, and more than 12,000 artillery. Troops of all nations had joined the great army — Italians, Austrians, Prussians, Bavarians, Westphalians; and men from Wirtemberg, from Saxony, from Baden, from Holland, might be found there in their various uniforms. Well might the Emperor Napóleon be almost intoxicated with joy as this immense multitude gathered round him. It was indeed a glorious sight. The foot regiment of the Blues marched in front, broad as a powerful stream, and densely pressed together. At their head martial music was heard, mingled with the crashing of trumpets. Then followed three rows of long-bearded

pioneers, with white leathern aprons and gleaming axes. The whole multitude, in step, act, and movement, seemed but as one man. The soldiers with their long bayonets glittering in the sun, appeared like moving walls. Instead of a standard an immense golden eagle, with outspread wings, was borne above them, as if taking the warriors under its protection. The Emperor's guards might be distinguished above all. Being men of large stature, they looked like savage giants with their high caps of bears' skin. Yet even these were surpassed in beauty by the Dutch Guards, whose uniforms were of the purest white cloth. Then how powerful was the impression made by the sight of the masses of cavalry ! Then came numerous regiments of the mounted Jäger, in green uniforms with red facings ; pieces of fur, resembling that of a tiger, bordered the glittering helmet, from which waved a streamer of horse-hair. The hussars followed them, with their richly-laced dollmans, or jackets, and their low, broad caps of bears' skin, from which hung a red bag with golden tassels. Then came the cuirassiers, protected on the breast and on the back by brilliantly-polished cuirasses. The horses they rode were gigantic creatures. Numerous trumpeters

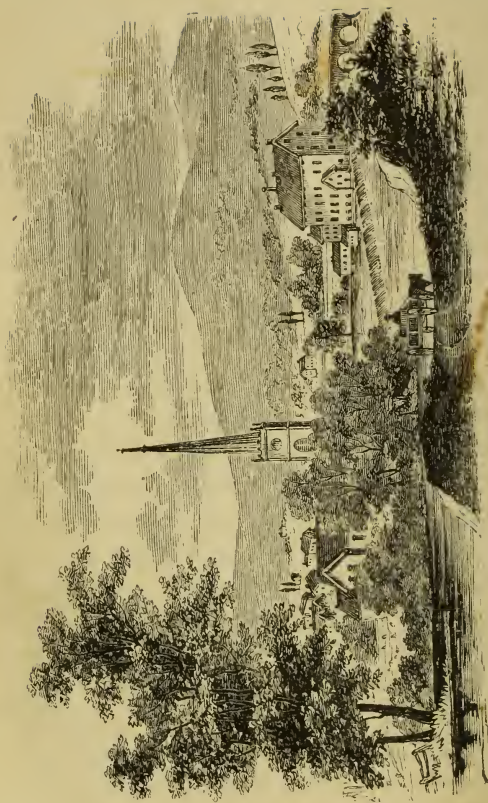
performed the most inspiring music before each regiment. Thousands of sabres that now were waved to do homage to the Emperor were destined ere long to be stained with human blood ; thousands upon thousands of bayonets would pierce the bodies of fellow-men ; and the millions of balls that the enemy brought with them would quiet for ever many a heart now beating high with hope and excitement. An observer might well be dazzled at the first sight of this magnificent scene, especially as he gazed at the threatening cannon, each drawn by six or eight horses, and surrounded by the artillerymen with their accompanying implements ; but a very little consideration would induce him to mourn over rather than exult in such a splendid array of destructive machinery.

Augustus, however, felt nothing of this as, with his regiment, he passed before the Emperor. Napoleon was surrounded by a numerous staff of gay and distinguished officers. But the boy could see only him. Among all the gentlemen present he was the most simply attired. A small three-cocked hat, without a plume or any mark of distinction, was on his head. His coat was green, ornamented with a single star. His breeches and waistcoat were white. His coun-

tenance was pale, but lighted with a pair of piercing eyes. In stature he was small, but inclined to stoutness.

On entering the Russian borders, Napoleon thus addressed his troops: — “Soldiers, a wide field of glory again lies before you. From the arid deserts of Egypt up to this spot you have passed through a career of victory. You have now an opportunity of continuing it. We will conquer the Russians, and hunt the barbarians out of Europe. In less than two months I will lead you into the capital of the ancient czars. There you shall rest from your toils, and reap the reward of your labors. I will there determine upon the conditions of peace, and bring you back, covered with glory, to your native country.”

It would be well for mankind if they only had as much faith in the word of God as the soldiers had in the word of Napoleon. They were firmly convinced of the truth of what he said, and saluted their monarch with thundering shouts of “Long live the Emperor.”



The Village of Moswka.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BURNING OF THE MILL.

THE village of Moswka was situated on the road leading to Smolensk. It was in the evening of the same day on which the French had entered the Russian territory that the church bells were heard ringing at an unusual hour. Old and young immediately answered the summons, and assembled in the place of worship, which was lighted up with wax tapers. Urged on more by feelings of curiosity than of devotion, the inhabitants of the village crowded round the altar. On the steps stood their venerable pastor. His raised hand commanded silence and attention from those who were entering; and when all were assembled, he thus addressed them. His voice was strong, but testified deep inward emotion: —“ My children, the bands of the French have this day entered the sacred bounds of your beloved country, to violate our sanctuaries, and to inflict the evils of

robbery, murder, and fire upon all who resist them. In order that the enemy may encounter more certain destruction, our own warriors will not advance to meet them. The French will doubtless arrive at this place early to-morrow morning. It now becomes our duty to do all in our power to prevent their progress, or at any rate to increase their difficulties. Proceed immediately, therefore, to break down the bridge that crosses our river, and to fill up the wells. Burn your houses, lead your cattle away, and hasten with your children into the interior of the country, so that the enemy on their arrival may find only a desert."

The assembled multitude rushed from the church to commence the duty of laying waste the village. There lay the clean thatched cottages, with the soft light of the setting sun shining upon them. Many children were playing around. The elder-trees were full of bloom, and with the green lime and graceful willow enlivened the long street which formed the principal part of the village. The low murmur of the river might be heard as it passed under the narrow bridge, mingled with the lowing of the herds returning from the pasture. By the side of the stream stood a large mill; but

though the wheel was turning rapidly, it seemed to no purpose, for the miller was no longer attending to it. On hearing the minister's address he had hastily left the church, and now stood engaged in deep and anxious thought.

The poor animals were now driven out of their stalls; geese, ducks, fowls and pigeons, were all collected together. The women loaded themselves with their household treasures—the linen, that was their own handiwork; while the men fastened bundles of straw to the railings of the bridge, and set fire to them. In a short time all the houses in the village were burning, the mill alone excepted. The children were the first to leave the burning village, driving the beasts before them. The women followed, almost weighed down with their heavy bundles. The men were holding a last consultation with their venerable minister.

“How is this, Master Naumau?” said the latter in great astonishment to the miller, who stood before the unconsumed mill, apparently quite undecided what to do. “Will you not follow our example?”

“Forgive me, reverend father,” returned Naumau in great confusion. “I really do not know what to determine upon. It will be ten

times more difficult and more expensive to rebuild this mill, which is the only property I possess, than the cottages that surround it. I am a German, as you well know ; and since there are German regiments with the French army, I hope, by their assistance, to get through without loss."

This speech occasioned a general feeling of indignation in the bystanders. They cried as with one voice, "Shame upon the false stranger! Let us burn his mill without asking his leave. He is a friend to the French !"

"Peace !" commanded the minister, "leave him to follow his own pleasure. Be assured he will repent it. I grieve for his wife, our sister Kathinka, and her children." Then turning to the miller, he added, "The evil that they may meet with through your selfish policy be upon your own head !"

The Russians, therefore, left him, though not without many reproachful words. After some hours, as the night proceeded, the French arrived. The want of a bridge did not prevent them from crossing the shallow stream ; but on account of the cannon, it was found necessary to rebuild it as quickly as possible. In order to accomplish this, they must have materials to

work with, and the neighboring mill afforded all the beams and wood they wanted. Without attending to the pathetic remonstrances of the miller, they hastened to pull down the mill; and they even compelled the poor man to assist in building the bridge, as he was well acquainted with the locality. Naumau began bitterly to repent that he had not followed the example of his companions; his anguish was the greater as he thought of the probability, that whilst he was thus laboring against his will, his wife and children might be exposed to ill-treatment from the haughty Frenchmen. He attempted several times to escape; but was as often driven back from fear of the soldiers, who threatened to shoot him. The soldiers now complained that, in spite of the lighted torches, they could not see well enough to continue their work. In consequence of this complaint the officer in command immediately ordered them to set fire to the mill-house. The command was obeyed amid cries of joy; and in a few minutes the burning mill shed a dazzling light over the whole landscape. The distress of the poor miller can be imagined; for the rude soldiers would not suffer him to stir from the spot, but

urged him with blows to continue his work without intermission.

In the meantime the regiment to which Augustus belonged reached the spot. At the same time the miller's wife, with two little children in her arms, and followed by her daughter about eleven years old, rushed out of the flaming building.

"Marie," she said, as soon as she had placed her precious charge in safety, "take care of the children. I will see if it is possible to save anything;" and she ran back towards the flames.

The little ones screamed out after her, "Mother, mother, do not leave us!" It was vain for Marie to attempt to restrain them; they broke from her grasp, and endeavored to enter the house. Their mother met them at the door. "Away, my dear children," she said, "let me try to get the money-box." But her entreaties were of no avail; the children clung round her neck, and prevented her from proceeding.

"Let me go instead, dear mother," cried Marie; and without waiting a reply she disappeared in the flaming house. The miller's wife wrung her hands in speechless agony while she waited the return of her child. The flames

raged most fiercely, until the whole building seemed enveloped in fire. Nothing could be seen of Marie ; but suddenly her voice was heard, " O, mother, save me ; I am burning ! "

The poor mother disengaged herself from her children, and rushed to the cottage to save her daughter. She was forcibly stopped by two Frenchmen. " Stay where you are, " they said ; " she is lost ! " They thought it was too late to help her, for the poor girl's cries for assistance became fainter and fainter.

The mother literally writhed with anguish as she redoubled her fruitless efforts to escape from the tight grasp of the soldiers. The two little children uttered violent cries.

Augustus could not remain an uninterested spectator of this fearful scene. Quick as lightning he escaped from the ranks, and was close by the mill. A French officer of distinction endeavored to stop his progress ; the boy threw his drum between the officer's legs in such a way as to cause him to fall at full length upon the ground, and then he mounted the staircase, which had just caught fire. The half-stifled cry of the little girl served as a guide. Dragging her with him, he leaped, clambered, or crept from one part of the building to another, for

the flames prevented him from returning. At length he found himself, with his companion, near the foundation of the mill, close by the wheel and the water. A small vaulted apartment, like a cellar, in which the pole of the mill rested, served as a refuge to the adventurers. The flames raged above their heads, beams crashed, and streams of fire poured down in all directions, and were extinguished with a hissing sound in the river by their side. Sometimes they thought they heard the heart-rending cries of the miller's wife, which were always answered by Marie. A long time was passed in this manner, the fire raging without any abatement of fury. Nor was the situation of the children free from danger. Squeezed in a corner of the narrow cell, they were compelled patiently to wait the result; and towards daybreak the fire was extinguished.

With the exception of some few exclamations, the young prisoners had not spoken to each other. The girl had enough to do in thinking of her parents, and Augustus felt anxious and uncomfortable at the responsibility he had incurred in leaving his regiment; the latter had, however, remarked that his young com-

panion spoke good German ; and he therefore concluded she was one of his country-women.

As soon as it could be done without danger, Augustus and the little girl clambered into the open air over the beams and smoking ruins. He anxiously looked round for his comrades ; but only a waste, deserted space was to be seen. Nothing but desolation was around them. The fresh morning breeze passed over the ashes of the village, sometimes driving upwards a shower of clear sparks, sometimes white columns of smoke. Marie shouted with all her strength, first in German, then in Russe. She called upon her mother, her brother and sister, her father, the neighbors ; but no answer did she receive save the crackling of the charred beams of her former home. The unhappy child wandered among the ruins by the side of Augustus, sobbing bitterly as she passed along. The boy's distress, too, increased every minute. It was not that he regretted his successful attempt to save Marie ; but he was exceedingly desirous of rejoining his comrades as soon as possible. He sought in vain for the drum he had thrown away ; and this was an additional cause of vexation to him. In the meantime it was absolutely necessary to determine what course to pursue.

He endeavored by kind words to comfort and soothe the sorrowful little girl. He promised to bring her to her parents ; and then taking her hand, they went in the direction in which he knew the army would proceed. After some hours' traveling he fell in with a French troop, who arrested him as a deserter, and soon delivered him up to his regiment. They had halted with the other troops in a small town that had been deserted by its inhabitants.

“Comrade,” said the soldiers when he came within hearing, “your affairs are in a bad state; you will have some trouble to get your neck out of the sling!”

Augustus implored them to take care of the desolate Marie, and give her into Sergeant Hoier's protection, which they promised faithfully to do.

CHAPTER IX.

AUGUSTUS IS SHOT.

THE apartment into which Augustus was led was filled with officers selected from the different regiments. His colonel, and the distinguished French officer between whose legs he had thrown the drum when he rushed into the miller's burning cottage, were among the number. The greatest harmony seemed to prevail; merry jokes were passing on all sides; and they were evidently eating with great relish the excellent meal that had been prepared for them.

The entrance of Augustus did not occasion the least disturbance. While the corporal was making his report to the colonel, Augustus was kept standing between two soldiers. At length he was summoned to come forward, after having waited scarcely ten minutes. On being questioned, he could not deny that he had left the ranks of his comrades; had thrown his drum between the legs of a French officer of the

staff; and had been taken prisoner as a deserter. The judge-advocate informed him that either of these offences was punishable with death; "And," added he, "you have not only broken the regimental oath, which promised submission, but you have been the first to offend in the enemy's territory." Without allowing of any pause in the important business of eating and drinking, he then proceeded to pass sentence upon Augustus; namely, that he should be shot to death! No one seemed to think of taking his tender age into consideration; but the matter was, on the contrary, conducted with as much indifference as if they were deciding upon the death of a fowl or of a duck.

This indifference made Augustus feel very unhappy, especially when he thought of the distress of his parents as compared with the want of sympathy in his judges. Even his colonel's manner towards him was changed; he was no longer kind and gracious in his bearing, but he sat there among the others with a frown upon his face, and seemed to pay no attention at all to the prisoner.

In vain poor Augustus turned an imploring glance towards him; he took no notice of the mute supplication.

Augustus could offer nothing in his defence, except that he was not prompted by any evil design in leaving the ranks, but simply by a desire to save the little girl from the flames. But the only answer he received to his simple plea came from the lieutenant who on a former occasion had treated Sergeant Hoier with so much hauteur; and he now said angrily, "Silly boy! do you suppose we have marched into Russia to save the Russians? We have come to conquer and destroy them. Besides, the soldier has nothing to do but blindly to obey the commands of his superiors; he has no business to trouble himself with other people's matters. Supposing even your brother or your father were in the enemy's army, it would be your duty to endeavor to shoot him as if he were a stranger!"

Poor Augustus shuddered at the bare idea of the possibility of such a case. "No," said he to himself; "I would rather be shot myself than kill my dear father or my brother."

He was now told that he might leave the room. But he could not do so without taking leave of the colonel who had formerly been so kind to him. He ran up to him, kissed his hand, bathing it with his tears, and thanked

him for the great kindness he had shown him up to that time.

The colonel looked sternly at him, compressed his lips, and said almost roughly, "I cannot help you, even if I would; your crime is too great. If you had only offended me, I might perhaps have forgiven you. But the fact that you have so insulted a French officer takes away all your chance of escape."

With these words he was turning his back on the poor boy; but the latter said, "Oh, sir, I am not going to ask you for my life. I have to thank you that they did not shoot me two months ago. But my poor father and mother! Will you tell them that I thought of them, and loved them always; that I send them a thousand thanks for the care that they have always taken of me; and that I"——his voice trembled as he hesitatingly uttered the words——"I was not very sorry to die?"

The colonel only answered with a slight nod of the head, then turned round and swallowed a glass of wine.

"Captain Warnech," he then said, "you will give orders for the execution."

A side glance from the French general in-

duced another French officer to say, "I will accompany your captain."

He bowed an assent, and they left the apartment with Augustus and the guard. They found Sergeant Hoier awaiting them outside with twenty-four men, four of whom were provided with spades and shovels. A drummer from time to time beating a muffled tattoo opened the procession which was to lead Augustus to his death.

A little beyond the last house in the town, the men who were provided with spades proceeded to dig a hole, to serve as a grave for poor Augustus; and the earth was soon shovelled up by its side. While this was going on, the soldiers with their muskets stood round the poor boy in gloomy silence. He likewise did not utter a word. No one endeavored to comfort him; no kind hand wiped away the large drops of perspiration that stood on his pale face; no minister was there to bless him and pray with him. Hoier was evidently struggling with himself. Looking at the young prisoner, who stood with his eyes fixed on the ground, except when he occasionally raised them to Heaven, he stroked his beard, as if undecided what to do.

“As sure as my name is Christopher,” muttered he, “I can’t keep it from the poor boy. The fright might do him as much harm as our balls. Let ten men,” added he aloud, “step forward to fire; if the prisoner does not fall, let ten more step up, and do their work better. Take aim as near the middle of the body as you can, and then you can’t very well miss. Now, my poor fellow,” said he to Augustus, “come, I must lead you to your resting-place!”

These words roused Augustus from his stupor. Summoning all his fortitude he said, “Farewell, comrades; take a sure aim, that I may suffer as little as possible.”

“Yes, yes,” they cried with one voice.

Hoier now led the prisoner up to the heap of sand. As they were walking, he said kindly to him, “Have you anything upon your mind?”

Augustus heaved a deep sigh. “No,” said he slowly; but he soon recollected himself, and quickly added, “Yes, indeed; the Russian girl — I am paying dear for saving her. But promise me, Father Hoier, to take care of her; and when you can, to give her up to her parents.”

“As true as Christopher is alive it shall be done,” returned the sergeant.

They had now reached the heap of earth. "Kneel down, my poor boy," commanded Hoier; "I will bind your eyes." He drew out his blue handkerchief, and laid it over his eyes. Augustus could not forbear trembling.

Perceiving this the sergeant again muttered to himself, "I can't help it, colonel. It's no use trying not to—— Whatever you may say, I can't help it." He continued aloud, "You need not think of making your last prayer to God now, my man. And yet, perhaps, you had better say a short prayer, that this evil matter may end well."

Augustus clasped his hands together, and with trembling lips but great devotion repeated the Lord's Prayer.

"Singular!" said Hoier to himself, "that those who are going to die should say the Lord's Prayer, when they don't want their daily bread any longer. I suppose, in their fright and distress, they can think of no prayer but what they learnt when they were little children. But what signifies?—the great God knows best what they want."

When Augustus had finished, the sergeant said a few words to him in a low voice, which made him tremble more violently than before.

This annoyed Hoier very much. "Comrade," said he to the boy, "don't be a coward. Kneel stiff and straight, so that you may not fall before the balls reach you, and so lengthen your trouble." He turned to his men, who had loaded their muskets in readiness to obey his commands. Ten men stepped to within about twelve paces of Augustus. The captain commanded, "Shoulder arms — present — fire!"

Puff went the ten muskets; Augustus sank lifeless upon the heap of sand, and fell into the grave that had been prepared for him. Quick as thought Hoier sprang to him, drew the handkerchief from his head, and examining the body, cried, "Well done, boys! no less than six balls have passed through his breast."

With the assistance of one of the spade-bearers he placed the body straight in the grave, and then they labored at shovelling the heap of sand into it.

Captain Warnech now took the arm of the French captain, who had been a most attentive spectator of all that had passed; and they walked with rapid steps to the town, hoping doubtless still to be in time to enjoy their share of the dinner.

They were no sooner out of sight than the

laborers left off filling up the grave, which indeed they had in the first instance only pretended to do. The body of Augustus still lay uncovered with sand. The other soldiers drew near the grave, and formed a close circle round it. The first thing they did was to put out of their mouths the bullets which they had secretly bitten from their cartridges before firing ; and then all joined in a hearty laugh at the idea of the trick they had played upon the French.

“That’s what you call shooting in the French fashion,” said one. “The boasters themselves taught us how to do it. How many of their people have they shot who ran away afterwards quite safe and sound ! ’Tis only tit for tat.”

“The French colonel,” chimed in a second, “seemed to fear something of the kind. That was the reason he sent one of his people.”

A great many merry speeches passed among the soldiers, for all were rejoiced at the success that had attended their manœuvre. Hoier, too, was in the best of humors ; and taking the hand of Augustus, who still lay apparently dead, he said with a solemn voice, “My boy, I desire you to stand up.”

But Augustus did not obey ; he lay in a deep swoon, stiff and pale.

"Silly boy!" said Hoier, drawing a flask from his pocket, "to think so much of a trifle. When you have been in a dozen battles, you will call such a thing as this mere child's play."

So saying, he rubbed the poor boy's face and temples with spirits. As he gradually revived, he found himself indeed alive. No bullet had passed through him. His comrades had indeed fired at him, but it was with blank cartridges; and this was what Hoier had told him would be the case, but he had not believed what he said.

Sobbing with joy, he shook hands with his comrades. "But does the colonel know about it?" he inquired; "he seemed so angry with me."

"That was only in appearance," answered Hoier; "because the Frenchmen were watching him. Do you understand me? We dared not have acted so without his consent. 'Hoier,' says he to me, 'be well prepared; I could never be happy again if that good lad were sent to the dogs for performing such a noble action.'"

"How kind of the colonel!" said Augustus joyfully. "I would go through fire and water for him; and for you, too, Father Hoier; and indeed, comrades, for you all."

"Well," laughed Hoier, "it comes with a

good grace from you to talk of running through fire for us, for you are evidently a first-rate hand at it. But hum, hum at present ; your kind offers will do us no good, for you must leave us."

"Leave you?" said Augustus, quite frightened.

"Yes ; you must go, and that directly," returned Hoier. "How could you think of anything else? If you stayed here, the whole affair would come to light, and our colonel would get into hot water. Indeed, if we stay here much longer we shall excite suspicion. Here's an old smock-frock which you can draw over your uniform. And yonder — look there — yonder, behind that garden-wall, you will find your little friend waiting for you. You had better go with her to the Russians. If you do not like being with them, and can find no other way of getting home, you can at any rate join us again when the affair of to-day is a little forgotten."

Augustus took a sorrowful leave of his companions ; begged Hoier to tell the colonel how grateful he was ; and then hastened away immediately to join the little Russian maiden.

He discovered her where Hoier had said ; and having found a safe place of concealment for

the night, they turned their footsteps at the earliest dawn towards the burned village, where Marie hoped to discover some traces of her parents.

CHAPTER X.

AUGUSTUS' COMBAT WITH HIMSELF, A WOLF,
AND A DOG.

ALTHOUGH his uniform was concealed by a smock-frock, Augustus did not dare to make use of the common highway, for fear of being recognised and again taken prisoner. He and Marie, therefore, chose the more unfrequented paths, though taking care at the same time to keep the high road in sight, and to avoid the troops that were marching upon it.

The distance between the two places was not very great, but the fugitives had to make so many turnings and windings that they increased it more than half. Augustus, however, did not feel the slightest fatigue. He was so rejoiced at having escaped a violent death, that he would have run any distance to place himself in safety. But he was afraid of fatiguing the little girl, who of course was not accustomed to such long journeys on foot as he was. He therefore

repeatedly stopped to rest, and inquire how Marie felt. She always denied being tired; but Augustus knew very well it was her anxiety about her parents that kept her in an excited, feverish state, and gave her for the time unnatural strength. It was now mid-day, and the sun burned more fiercely than Augustus imagined it could do in Russia. Whenever they came near a spring, a brook, or even a pool of standing water, they quenched their thirst; but neither of them thought of eating. At length they saw the ruins of the burned village in the distance. The sun was setting, and a splendid glow gilded the sky, as well as the land, which bore the sad marks of war and oppression. Marie hastened more quickly than ever to the remains of the village that had once been her home. Augustus followed, begging her to be cautious. This advice was not needed, however, for no human being was to be perceived in any direction. Poor Marie sank upon the threshold of the mill-house weeping bitterly. The threshold was almost the only part that remained entire. Augustus sitting down by her side, gave himself up to his thoughts. Where could those thoughts turn but to his beloved home, and the loving parents he had left? The

road that led to them now lay before him — he was free — and there was no one to prevent him from returning to his native country. His heart bounded with joy at the thought. The hundreds of miles that separated him from it, the perils of the journey, and his total want of money, were no obstacles in his eyes; nothing dismayed him. Even if he should have to beg his bread, he would joyfully set out, with home in prospect.

“O, dear father, mother, Bertha, and Robert!” he cried out, leaping up as he spoke, and stretching out his arms; “what joy to see you all again!”

A low suppressed sob by his side woke him from his delightful dream of happiness, and reminded him that he was not alone — that he was not his own master.

His gladness was now changed to bitter sorrow. He looked mournfully at his young companion, who, like him, was repeating the beloved words, father and mother, while she shed scalding tears at their loss. A powerful conflict now took place in the little boy’s mind; could he, dare he venture to commence such a journey with Marie; and would it be right to take her away forever from her native country and from

her parents? Or should he leave her alone to find her way to them? Helpless and weak, would not her destruction be almost certain? He looked compassionately and kindly at the weeping child. Had he not saved her life at the risk of losing his own? And should he do nothing more, after doing so much, and so make that life valueless? Augustus fought boldly with the temptation to return home, and at length he conquered.

“Do not cry, Marie,” he said boldly and cheerfully; “we will go now and look for your parents somewhere else. Shall we try the place to which you said the other inhabitants of the village had gone? I think that will be the best way.”

Augustus had strengthened his soul, and he now wanted to do the same to his body. He felt the calls of hunger unusually loud; but how should he quiet them?

“What have you in your little bundle?” he suddenly inquired of Marie, as he at that moment caught sight of a small wallet that hung at her side.

“The man with the thick beard gave it to me,” answered Marie, wiping away her tears with the corner of her apron.

"That must have been Hoier," said Augustus, as he opened the bundle. He found just what he had expected — bread and meat. Marie and he took a hearty meal. The sorrows of the young are violent, but they do not last long. The youthful pair were quite refreshed and invigorated as they left the village and wandered in search of the inhabitants. The evening grew darker, the stars appeared, but it still remained warm, and the air was clear. No sound was to be heard, but perfect stillness reigned around. The wanderers walked on cheerfully.

"Ah, see!" said Augustus joyfully, pointing with his hand to an object in the middle of their path; "that is a good sign; where you see a dog, you may be pretty sure to find men. There is one! it must be a shepherd's dog."

Marie looked up, but immediately drew him back, though she did not seem much frightened as she said in a low voice, "That is a wolf, and not a dog!"

"A wolf!" exclaimed Augustus with horror; and he put his hand to his left side, where he was accustomed to wear his sword, but he found none. It had been taken from him when he was made prisoner. "A wolf! we are lost!"

But let us run away ; perhaps he has not observed us."

Marie now became affected with his fear ; but she said, rather anxiously, " My father told me, if any one runs away from them, the wolves are sure to run after them."

" But," returned Augustus, " what shall we do ? Shall we let him eat us up without trying to prevent it ?"

" Oh, no !" said Marie almost laughing ; " it isn't so bad as that. My father says it is only in winter, and that in the most severe seasons, that a wolf attacks men. And then only when he is terribly hungry ; but if he were so now he would howl, and not sit there so quietly."

Augustus stood undetermined what course to pursue. He looked at the wolf ; the wolf looked at him. At last he was tired of this occupation. " We can't stand here the whole night," said he to Marie ; " let us move a little away from him."

" But suppose he should come after us ?" said Marie.

Augustus was almost at his wit's end ; " I won't wait any longer," at length he said impatiently. " Am I not a soldier ? Did not I run into the fire one day, and was shot at the

next? And shall I be afraid of a stupid wolf? Stay, old fellow, I will teach you to open that great mouth of yours!" He picked up a heavy stone, and added, "Now, Marie, if the wolf should spring at me, run away as fast you can. While I fight with him, you can get into a place of safety. Oh, if I only had my sword!"

As he spoke these words he threw the stone at the wolf. It struck his head with a hollow sound. Augustus waited rather anxiously the effect of his proceeding. A much heavier weight than the stone he had thrown at the wolf fell from his heart as he saw the fearful animal slowly rise and slink away with his tail between his legs.

"Bravo! bravo!" shouted Augustus quite relieved. "Just let him dare to look at us again. I will break his head for him the next time!"

As they pursued their journey, they looked round on all sides for the wolf, but it was nowhere to be seen. Augustus was in high spirits, more especially as he soon after found a thick cudgel, with which he armed himself.

"There!" said he joyfully. "Now I am well armed! I should like to beat such a tattoo on his skull that he would never forget it."

As soon as Augustus' warlike spirit had a little evaporated, and given place to more sobriety of mood, he said, "Marie, can you see no village or house? Is there no light visible any where?"

"No," returned Marie yawning.

"I suppose," continued Augustus, "that black thing before us is a forest?"

"Yes, it is a forest," answered the little girl. "Our way lies directly through it."

"Suppose," said Augustus, "we should find a number of wolves there, with one blow of my"——

"Bow, wow!" barked a huge dog, running towards them.

"Stand back!" cried Augustus, raising his cudgel; "three steps forward, and you are a dead dog!"

The dog certainly could not have understood the language he spoke. Without heeding in the slightest degree the threats and bearing of Augustus, he rushed furiously upon him. Down went the stick; but the dog very cleverly avoided the blow, and seized the other end of the cudgel between his teeth. Augustus could not get it away from him. On the contrary, the dog kept biting higher and higher up the

stick, so that at last Augustus was obliged to leave hold, as the dog had nearly reached his hand. The latter then jumped upon his breast, and threw him down.

Poor Augustus was very much startled, and began to fear that this time he should not escape. But the dog did not attempt to hurt him. It stood quietly over him; only at the slightest movement on the part of the boy it showed its teeth and snarled.

“Lie perfectly still,” said Marie, “and he will not hurt you.”

Augustus had no choice; he was compelled to follow her advice. Just then he heard approaching footsteps, and a voice addressing them in the Russian language.

Marie answered quickly and fearlessly. On looking up, Augustus saw two men standing before him, armed with muskets. At their desire Marie told Augustus to rise. Reddening from shame at having been conquered by a dog, the boy stood up. He followed the men without saying a word, while they spoke with Marie. On entering a dell in the forest they found a fire surrounded by a number of wild-looking Russians. All rose as the little wanderers entered the circle. Augustus gazed with a feel-

ing of apprehension at their suspicious and fierce countenances, and he stood within the circle like a criminal. But Marie was his guardian angel. She told the whole history to the Russians of all that had passed on the preceding days. How much Augustus now wished that he understood Russe! One comfort was, that Marie could interpret everything to him. He learned from her that neither her parents nor any of her acquaintances were of the party, and that these men were lying in wait for any Frenchmen they might find alone, that they might kill them. He, however, had nothing to fear, if he would only promise not to go over to the enemy. This Marie had taken upon herself already to promise.

The little travelers were beginning to be overpowered with sleep and fatigue. Couches of dried leaves were prepared for them, when, covered with a few clothes, they slept until the morning.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SURPRISE.

AUGUSTUS now taught the band of Russian peasants to act as drummers, the drums they used being of a very rough kind. Marie translated his directions. The drummer's pupils raised a fearful noise with their first attempts.

"I wish friend Hoier could see me," said Augustus laughing. "How surprised he would be to find me turned drummer again! But I must get credit by my scholars. I hope in a short time they will be able to imitate me."

So chattered our little friend the drumming-master. But we must now, in a few words, inform our readers how our hero came to play such a part.

After the two little wanderers had left the men in the forest, they traveled from place to place in search of Marie's parents; but all in vain. At first, wherever they went, they were amply supplied with food, though their unsettled

and useless life wearied Augustus exceedingly. Before long, however, what with the ravages made by the enemy, and the destruction made by the peasants themselves to prevent the French from obtaining supplies, food became very scarce, and the poor boy and girl had to encounter many unkind looks and hard words when they begged for something to eat. In the meantime bands of Russians began to assemble from all quarters, in obedience to the emperor's command, to range themselves under his standard, and oppose the hated enemy. The wanderers arrived at one of these appointed rendezvous. The arrival of Augustus, and his skill as a drummer, were not long a secret. The Russian authorities gave him the choice of being treated as a prisoner of war, or of adopting Russia for his country, and assisting in its defence. He resolved upon the latter; and that the more readily, because all that was required of him was the exercise of his skill as a drummer. He and Marie, therefore, had quarters assigned them; he received food and pay in the Russian service, and, as we have seen, soon commenced playing the master upon a small scale.

Marie was the more easily consoled for the

absence of her parents, because she loved Augustus as if he were her brother, and he took quite a father's care of her. Many weeks passed away in this manner. But gradually poor Augustus became a prey to most grievous homesickness. Whole nights he could not sleep, from a yearning to see his native country, and his beloved friends once more. He could not reconcile himself to the Russian manners and customs. Every day he saw the knout cruelly inflicted upon many military delinquents. Nay, even the officers themselves were sometimes obliged patiently to submit to a box on the ear from those who happened to be above them. Often he trembled for his own back, though he had fortunately escaped hitherto.

One evening, as usual, he had fallen asleep thinking of his distant home ; he dreamed that he was in his native town, when peace had just been proclaimed. The streets were full of people, rejoicing and shouting with delight. The thundering of cannon and the pealing of bells could be heard. Suddenly the noise became louder and more deafening ; the firing appeared to be nearer ; the windows shook with the clatter ; a bright light seemed to surround the

dreamer. He heard the piercing cry of a child, and —— he awoke.

Marie stood crying by his bedside, pulling him with all her strength ; the little room was illuminated as if with the rays of the mid-day sun ; angry voices sounded from below, mingled with cries of agony ; bullets whizzed through the crashing windows ; and the street seemed alive with noise, confusion, and fighting.

“O Augustus, Augustus !” sobbed the little girl, “I am so frightened ; the dreadful war is come !” Augustus was yet scarcely awake. He rubbed his eyes, and first stared at the trembling Marie, then at the burning houses opposite.

“Oh stay — stay ! don’t go !” said Marie ; trying to pull him back as he went towards the window.

“They are our people !” shouted Augustus, looking out ; “that is my regiment—comrades ! Hoier ! I am here too !” He ran down ; Marie ran after him.

When they arrived at the open front door that led into the street, and were passing out, a soldier whom Augustus recognized as one of the company to which he belonged, rushed before them. “Comrade !” the boy joyfully cried out ; but the comrade’s fury prevented his

either seeing or hearing. He looked so fierce and so savage that Marie, quite terrified, instinctively shrank back, and pulling Augustus with her, they both fell to the ground. It was a fortunate fall for them; for the soldier had really pointed his bayonet at them. But imagining that he had struck them down, he ran on. Augustus and Marie rose, stunned by their fall; the former now saw at a little distance his old protector the colonel upon his horse, and surrounded by his people.

Poor Augustus called to him joyfully and imploringly. The colonel must have heard him, but what was his reply?

“Forward — forward, my brave fellows! Down with everything that stops the way! Spare no one! Give no quarter! Forward — forward!”

What a change in him who was formerly so kind! Augustus could not understand it. As circumstances were so altered, he thought it most prudent to get out of the way of the tumult. With great difficulty he got back to his quarters, which were now forsaken by all the other inhabitants. Full of thought he cowered down behind the door. “Can it be,” thought he, “that I am so altered that my com-

rades do not know me? Or do they believe that I am really gone over to the enemy? What would Hoier have done I wonder?"

Scarcely had he uttered the words before the very man entered the house, followed by several others.

"Hoier—Hoier!" cried the boy as he extended his arms towards him. But even Hoier raised his musket, and would have shot the supposed Russian had not Augustus called out, "I am Augustus Werner, your drummer!"

The sergeant let his weapon fall upon hearing these words, and said with astonishment, "What! You here? How's this? I shouldn't have known you."

"Well," said Augustus, "you must all have changed very much in the short time we have been separated. Stiefel of our company, who was the first I met, would have run me through with his bayonet; the colonel would have let them trample me down; and even you, Father Hoier,"——

"Ha—ha—ha!" laughed the sergeant; "it is plain enough you are quite a green-horn in the noble art of war. We are just the same as ever. And what makes us seem so different to you is merely the rage of fighting, which pre-

vents us from hearing or seeing. When we fight, we thrust everything out of our way that opposes us, or that does not wear our colors. We should not even spare our fathers or our brothers. We never look first to see who he is; we strike, shoot, stab, thrust, rush blindly on; the more we kill the better!"

"But," inquired Augustus, "what has put you in such a rage? No one yesterday knew of you being so near; and I am pretty sure they were all quietly in their beds last night."

"Right enough," returned Hoier gaily. "We surprised them when they were sound asleep; and that they might have fires in their rooms, we burned their houses over their heads!"

"Poor men!" said Augustus. "They have been very kind to me, and they never did you any harm."

"That is true," replied Hoier; "but all is fair in war."

"But why should there be war?" asked the boy. "Here we have marched hundreds of miles just to murder men we never saw in our lives before."

"Hold your tongue, you foolish boy!" said Hoier angrily. "Don't reason; a soldier has no business to reason—he must obey. The

Emperor Napoleon has said 'There must be war—the Russians are your enemies;' and the soldier's duty is to fall upon them without mercy. But should the Emperor say to-morrow, 'Stay! there is peace. Sheath your swords—the Russians are your friends.' Hurrah! Then 'twould be 'brother Russians' instead. 'Shake hands, old boys—we are comrades!'"

Still Augustus was not convinced, and he could not refrain from adding, "I always thought it was impossible to love or hate others at the word of command."

"All is possible with Napoleon," answered Hoier. "There never was his equal. A few words from him do more than a hundred cannons from others. Perhaps, too, even I shall succeed in winning a long red ribbon with a white cross upon it." And he pointed to his breast, as if in imagination he saw himself decorated with the cross of the legion of honor.

"A long red ribbon?" said Augustus inquiringly.

"You are a stupid boy," returned Hoier; "and I am little less so to waste my time in talking to you, instead of making the most of it. My people will have ransacked the house whilst I am chattering in this foolish way. I

must get my share of the booty." So saying he was going to join the soldiers, when—

"Father Hoier!" Augustus called after him.

"What is the matter now?" inquired the other.

Augustus replied with some confusion, "I always thought you were an honorable man."

"Well, who says anything to the contrary?"

"Why you are going to steal what belongs to other people!"

"I'll give you a little piece of advice, young man, which you will do well to follow. Don't presume too much on my good-nature, and choose your words better. Plundering is not stealing, and all's fair in war." He sprang away.

"Ah!" said Augustus to himself, "it is very plain that war is an excuse for all that is evil."

The soldiers now returned laden with booty. What they could not use or take away they wantonly destroyed and wasted. Provisions, clothes, linen, lamps, soap, and furniture were strewed about, and trampled upon. By far the greater part of the things they found they destroyed. Augustus looked on with sorrow; and in everything but a happy mood he followed his comrades when they left the burning town, and returned to the army.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BATTLE.

AUGUSTUS again took the post of drummer in his former regiment. The colonel and all his comrades gave him a cordial welcome. Marie was placed under the care of a sutler, and could ride or walk as she pleased ; when the army rested or made a halt, she always sought out her young preserver, who now had nothing more to fear from the French general. Augustus saw with surprise that the regiment had dwindled down to little more than half its former numbers.

“ Ah ! ” said Hoier, as he was questioning him about his adventures ; “ you may thank your stars that the soldiers only pretended to shoot you, or you might soon have been shot in real earnest. Nothing would do but we must storm an old nest of a fortress called Smolensk, and many of our best men never saw daylight

again. Six drummers fell there, and had you been with us you might have shared the same fate."

After some days of painful and wearisome marching, there was a report that the whole army of the enemy was stationed in the direct road of the French army, and that a decisive battle might be expected. Strange enough! this intelligence gave universal satisfaction. All were heartily weary of the tedious march, and gladly welcomed any change, even though it were to cost the death of thousands.

Now then the ranks were closed up; each regiment had its proper place assigned it; and the whole body of men in battle array, marched in close and compact order. The army might be compared to a bird—the body of which consisted of the very flower of the troops, flanked by innumerable cannon; huge wings also were not wanting, so arranged as to enclose and overwhelm the enemy. At some distance in the rear marched a second army of reserve, in readiness to support and assist the former in case of necessity. The boundless plain which they were traversing was scarcely sufficient to afford space for all the men who were to be engaged in the battle.

It was towards the evening of September 5, 1812, that the thundering of the cannon announced the commencement of the famous battle of Borodino. Earth and sky shook with the fearful explosions. Augustus had never heard anything of the kind so near him before. He changed color with fear. But his regiment bivouacked on the ground as calmly and as undisturbed as though what was going on had no concern whatever with them. The soldiers ate, drank, joked, laughed, and went to sleep as usual. This indifference made him still more uncomfortable. He whispered some remarks to Hoier; and as the sergeant noticed the trembling of his young companion, he said quietly, "We have nothing to do with this affair. It concerns only the intrenchment on the left wing. The enemy's chief intrenchment will cost more blood. But we must break through that, and capture the village of Borodino also."

"And what then?" inquired Augustus.

"Then," continued Hoier, "there will be nothing to hinder us from entering Moscow."

"And what then?" again inquired Augustus.

"Then peace will be proclaimed, and we shall go home."

"But we had peace at home. What was the

use, then, of marching so far, and of sacrificing so many lives? Could we not have had it much more easily?"

"You know nothing about these matters. There must be war or the great comet would not have been seen last year."

"I think it was Napoleon who began the war, and not the comet."

"Certainly. But the comet announced that it was to be."

"That comet could not speak; how, then, could it proclaim war?"

"Silly child! I tell you it was prophesied."

"But who prophesied it? God did not; the comet did not. It must therefore have been a man who deceived us."

"You are a very funny fellow!" growled Hoier as he turned away.

Augustus thought over this conversation, and at last came to the conclusion that men attributed to the innocent comet their own misdeeds, in order to find an excuse for themselves, and so render themselves irresponsible for their own sins.

At length the roar of the cannon ceased. As far as the eye could reach watch-fires blazed, around which the soldiers reclined. Few, how-

ever, amongst them could sleep, from the excitement of expectation.

“I wonder whether I shall be alive at this time to-morrow?” said Augustus to himself. The poor boy felt very unhappy as one painful thought after another came into his mind. The night slowly passed away; and many of the soldiers, when the flutter of excitement had subsided, felt so wearied that their eyelids closed, and they dropped into a short slumber, perhaps for the last time. The fires gradually went out; all was quiet; and the stillness of the night was only occasionally broken by the calls of the sentries at their posts, and the neighing of the horses. This, however, lasted but a short time. No sooner had the dim, gray light of the approaching day appeared in the horizon, than the soldiers rose quickly from their grassy couch without waiting for the summons of the trumpet; the pyramids of guns were quickly taken down; and all fully equipped, stood to their arms. The colonel rode along the ranks, exhorting them to show their bravery and fidelity; the sergeants called over the rolls of their several companies. Orders were then given for the troops to breakfast as speedily as possible.

And now the glorious sun arose in all its splendor—not, alas! upon fields destined to produce fruitfulness and plenty, but blood and destruction. The larks on this day forgot to carol forth their sweet notes of thanksgiving and joy. They had fled far away, terrified by the immense multitude of warriors, and the dreadful roar of the cannon.

From time to time a threatening roar might be heard resounding through the mists of the morning. The soldiers waited with intense anxiety the call to battle. Soon came the command to fortify the position of the army by throwing up intrenchments. A tremendous bustle was the consequence. Before the close of the day innumerable ditches, with immense heaps of earth beside them, had been dug—some of them straight as a line, others zig-zagged and vandyked. The second night passed without fighting; but the bloody work began with all the greater fury on the morning of the third day, the 7th September. Twelve hundred huge pieces of artillery shook the earth as they poured forth fire and death. The skies seemed to burn. Some of the messengers of death flew whizzing over Augustus' regiment, which for the present stood motionless, resting on their

arms. The young drummer was now in such a position as he had scarcely ever dreamed of before. His muscles seemed to have lost all power of action ; his knees knocked against each other ; he felt faint and giddy, and big drops of perspiration rolled down his brow.

The young lieutenant, who has been mentioned before in the course of our narrative as so haughty to his inferiors, seemed no less affected by fear. He placed a dram-bottle with trembling hands to his white lips, as if hoping that the spirit would renovate his courage. This did not escape the notice of the soldiers who were standing near him, and one of them whispered to another, "Our milk-sop of a lieutenant has the cannon fever !" and indeed a very violent fever it was, that affected poor Augustus also.

The front battalions of the line now got into motion ; those behind advanced also. It soon came to the regiment immediately in front of that in which Augustus was placed. Then came their turn. The officers buckled their sword-belts more tightly ; the soldiers raised their knapsacks an inch higher ; all waited in expectation of the word of command. It came ;

they heard the colonel's powerful voice exclaiming, "Fix bayonets! March!"

The regimental band instantly struck up an inspiriting march; the sound of the instruments, however, could be heard only by those who were nearest. Augustus could not have uttered a word had his life depended upon his speaking. At first they marched rather slowly, but the rapidity of their step increased every minute. Not one of the soldiers knew at what point they were aiming; they merely saw the dark masses of their comrades before them, and the chasms that were every minute made in their ranks, and as instantly filled up again. The thick smoke prevented their taking any distant view; when suddenly the command was given, "Charge!"

Our little hero now found himself running at a smart trot behind his comrades. He gave a beat at every step upon his drum—"Tum, tum, tum!" A tremendous shell crashed in the midst of the soldiers; Augustus felt the hot sparks against his face; he stumbled against something that lay in his path, and fell to the ground.

When at length with great difficulty he raised himself up, he saw the ground covered with the

dead and dying, and the dense masses of soldiers before him scattered in every direction.

“Close the ranks!” shouted the colonel. “Forward! my boys!” The thinned ranks pressed together, and made way for themselves over the bodies of their former comrades as they rushed forward.

A gust of wind which cleared away the thick smoke for a minute enabled Augustus to see a high entrenchment in the distance, from whence the enemy’s tremendous park of artillery was furiously playing. Every moment innumerable jets of fire burst forth. Before the roar of the cannon whose discharge he had just witnessed could reach him, he felt himself thrown down and covered with heavy bodies, which prevented him from seeing anything. His senses failed, and he fainted. Repeated roars of cannon aroused him; he was still in the same position, and it was almost unbearable. He could not move one of his limbs. Was he wounded? He could not tell.

Whilst endeavoring to disengage himself from the dead bodies that pressed him down, he heard a distant sound, differing from anything that he had ever heard before. The noise increased every moment. The earth seemed to

tremble. An uninterrupted thunder, with a hollow sound quite different from that of artillery, came nearer and louder. A shower of hail seemed to accompany it. As it came still nearer, the sound changed to the clanking of thousands of chains. What was it but the raging army now rushing in full career over him! He felt himself pressed down, squeezed by the bodies lying above him. They were dead, and gave him but slightly the impression that was made upon themselves.

The regiments now passing over them were those of the Saxon Cuirassiers and Guards, which were charging over the battle-field towards the chief intrenchment.

But one murderous fire had these troops to sustain from its occupiers; then they were silent; the intrenchment was taken—the battle won.

Augustus again lay senseless—how long he could not tell. A violent jerk of his arm brought him to himself. He found his burden removed, and again he saw the daylight. When he opened his eyes, he perceived a Frenchman by his side, who was endeavoring to deprive him in like manner of his uniform. In great astonishment he asked the reason of such a pro-

ceeding. The soldier muttered angrily that he thought that he had been dead, and that he had considered himself as his heir. He then turned to another body, and recommenced plundering.

Augustus now looked round him with horror. Heaps of slain lay on all sides ; many had already been stripped ; and all were more or less disfigured by wounds, blood, and the trampling of the cavalry. He had himself only escaped by a miracle ; when his slaughtered comrades fell upon him, their bodies had so protected him that neither their heavy weight nor the tramp of the horses had injured him in the least ; otherwise he must have been stifled or squeezed to death.

He discovered his colonel's horse very much lacerated ; but the colonel himself he could not see. He looked round, in hopes of finding one of his comrades who might inform him of what had taken place ; but in vain.

Quite discouraged and dispirited, he now directed his steps to the spot where his regiment had been stationed at first. There lay the great drum, pierced through by a cannon-ball, and marking the spot where the band had been placed. He revolved the past more and more in his mind, when suddenly he recollected

having seen a little figure glide past him as the regiment was charging. Had he not in his confusion quite forgotten poor Marie?

“O Marie, Marie!” he called out in agony, “are you lost too? Why did you not stay with the sutler?” At first he feared she had been trampled down by the horses, and he looked in all directions to have his fears confirmed; for he knew that even if unable to recognize her face, it would be impossible to mistake her slender form and her feminine attire.

While thus wandering about and calling her by name, he was astonished to see the great drum suddenly move. It fell down; and Marie, quite unharmed, but very pale, appeared before him! Full of delight at meeting so unexpectedly, the two embraced each other heartily. They were not separated now; and though they were still on the fearful battle-field, their prospects seemed far brighter than before their meeting.

Marie told her tale in a few words. She had run a few steps by the side of Augustus, when she was carried away from him, and had fallen down. Terrified by the roar and confusion, she had crept into the large drum, which was lying near her; and there she had remained in a half-

conscious state until she heard him calling her. Walking hand in hand, they now proceeded towards the chief intrenchment that had occasioned the sacrifice of so many thousands of lives.

“I should like to know,” said Augustus, “why they were so eager to gain this? Perhaps there were some great treasures preserved here, or something very important concealed.”

They could scarcely make their way over the numerous dead bodies of men and horses. Streams of blood were flowing; heads, arms, and legs were scattered in all directions. In the intrenchment itself nothing was to be seen but heaps of earth, trenches filled with dead men, shattered cannon-wheels and carriages, intermixed with many wounded. It was a sad sight to see the latter. A Russian officer, whose head was dreadfully mutilated, uttered a few words with his dying voice.

“What does the poor man say?” asked Augustus of Marie.

“He is begging us to get him a little water,” answered Marie sobbing.

Augustus looked around with the intention of gratifying the dying man’s last wish if possible. He saw two Frenchmen standing by an-

other of the wounded, and thinking they might possibly have some water with them, he hastened towards them.

But the scene that then presented itself made him forget his errand. A Russian sat upon the ground, his arm broken, and his feet dreadfully injured; near him stood the two Frenchmen, endeavoring to tear his uniform from his body. One sleeve was already drawn off, the other resisted all their efforts, in consequence of the fracture of the arm. The poor sufferer groaned with agony, so tortured was he by these barbarians; but deaf to his intreaties, they would not desist till they had succeeded in securing the desired booty. Augustus fled from them as if they had been infected with the plague.

Another Russian stopped his progress, both of whose legs had been shot away. He had managed to raise himself upon his bleeding stumps, and was still able to keep the upper part of his body in an erect position, although the near approach of death was denoted by the broad white lines that appeared upon his face. He had clasped his hands with fervor; his half-opened eyes were turned towards heaven, and his lips prayed slowly and distinctly.

“Look, Marie!” said Augustus, quite affected

at the sight. "That soldier is dying like a good man; he is asking God to bless him, and to take him to himself.

"No, indeed," returned Marie, shuddering as she spoke; "he is cursing the enemies of his country, and imploring a bloody revenge.

"Oh, how glad I am," said Augustus, "that we have nothing to do with these dreadful curses! If every one thought as I do, there would be no war. I should never be happy again if I were to cause the death of a man."

They hastened to leave this scene of horrors; but their progress was arrested by the arrival of the Emperor Napoleon at the head of a numerous staff. He came to view the field of battle. With a countenance cold and unmoved as marble he rode over the dead, dying, and wounded. The groans, lamentations, and cries of the soldiers who lay around made no impression upon him. He gazed at the prospect before him through a spy-glass.

"It has been a glorious victory!" said one of the generals who rode by his side. "The intrenchment and the village below were bravely defended; yet both were taken. Fifty thousand slain and wounded lie upon the field."

"Fifty thousand lives," said Augustus to

himself, "merely to gain a heap of earth and a village that is burned down! What a price to pay!"

"There is nothing now to prevent our entrance into the ancient city of Moscow," continued the general. "Long live the Emperor!"

"Long live the Emperor!" shouted the whole party.

The old Russian, with death in his face, snatched up a musket that was lying near him, to make one last attempt to deprive the Emperor of his life.

A Frenchman, perceiving this, struck him on the head, and he died immediately. Napoleon went away; the children followed at a distance, hoping to come up with the remains of the regiment.

Night came on. The moon arose; but she was concealed by dense clouds. She would not shed her silvery light upon that field of horrors. Many thousands of the dying writhed and groaned in the stillness of midnight, imploring a quicker death, and a speedy release from their sufferings. Then the pale angel of death came, and extinguished one by one the sparks of life. He closed the weary eyes—he straitened the tired limbs—the wounds ceased to bleed.

But there were many who could not die; the thread of life with them seemed made of iron! Death, deaf to their despair, passed them by, and their agony continued for many days.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GRAND CALAMITY.

Moscow, the prize which the victory of Borodino had procured, lay—after a few days' march—with its houses, palaces, and churches, before the eyes of the French army. The roofs of the Kremlin glittered with gold in the rays of the sun, and dazzled the eyes of the conquerors. Ha! what glorious booty did they anticipate in the rich old city. They entered without firing a single shot, or striking a single blow.

Napoleon, however, here met with a great disappointment, which served to qualify the joy and exultation which he had felt at his recent victory. He had expected that, as usual in all conquered cities, an embassy of the principal inhabitants should come out to meet him, submissively imploring mercy and pardon.

Nothing of the kind took place here. The streets were still as death; no staring and

shouting multitude received the French army. Strange, that the man who appeared so callous and indifferent to the sufferings and opinions of others, should feel such displeasure when they did not render him the homage that he looked for ! He passed along the empty streets in an angry mood, and haughtily chose the magnificent palace of the Kremlin for his head-quarters.

His soldiers, on the other hand, were highly delighted to find that the inhabitants had fled, and that the houses were all unoccupied. Of course they considered them as their property, and immediately set about selecting those that were the most eligible. They occupied suites of rooms that had been prepared for princes ; they threw themselves with their heavy boots upon the most costly sofas, and upon the silken beds with their gilded canopies. They brushed their clothes upon finely-polished tables, and threw about the rarest Chinese porcelain and Japan ornaments as they would the commonest earthen-ware. Cellars and store-closets were broken open, and their contents sinfully wasted. The soldiers ate the most expensive dainties till they could eat no longer ; and the richest wines flowed in streams. The drawers and closets did not escape them ; they took from them the

finest linen, shawls, handkerchiefs, and wearing apparel they could find. As twilight approached, they rushed into the secret recesses of the houses with large bundles of lighted candles and torches, regardless of the danger, should they contain anything combustible. Many fires originated in consequence of their carelessness; but they passed on, not thinking of troubling themselves to extinguish them, as they were merely destroying the possessions of their enemies. On the contrary, they looked on not only with calmness, but with a horrible gratification, as the fires increased, and spread to the neighboring houses. The general and his soldiers acted both alike; but their sin brought its own punishment.

The fires extended over the wooden houses in Moscow with great rapidity. Still, much might have been saved, if the soldiers, instead of plundering, would have endeavored to extinguish the flames. But no one thought of doing this. In their arrogance as conquerors, and confidence of security, they deemed such a step quite unnecessary. They looked only to new conquests and fresh booty.

It was on one of these days of horror that a carriage drawn by three horses stopped in the

vicinity of a house that was in flames. Some soldiers belonging to the Rhenish troops carried a wounded man into the coach, which the surgeon had made as comfortable as possible. A little girl got in as well ; and besides the coachman, a soldier mounted the box, who had bandages on his head and arm.

A little drummer (who, as our readers will readily guess, was our young friend Augustus) now approached the surgeon. "Do you think, sir, that the colonel will be able to bear such a long journey?"

"Do not fear, my little man," answered the surgeon ; "the colonel could no longer be of service to the army, even were he restored to health. He must therefore return home, where every care will be taken of him."

"Farewell, Marie," said Augustus, addressing the little girl ; "be very attentive to our good colonel, and do all that you can to make him comfortable. I hope, by and by, I shall see you with your parents, who must have returned to their mill by this time. Good-by till we meet again." Both the children shed tears while they shook hands with each other.

"Ah, Hoier," added Augustus to the soldier on the box, "I feel very unhappy ; all my

friends are leaving me—you, the colonel, and Marie. What will become of me? The lieutenant dislikes me; and wicked Donnert, who murdered poor Emily, has come back into the regiment. He hates me, and nothing but your being here has prevented him from doing me an ill turn. There will be nothing to hinder him now."

"Don't grumble, boy," said the wounded man from his elevated position; "'tis a sin to do so. Why, you have got off better than any of us; not a limb in your body is hurt. I should not care about this cut in my head, but the loss of the fingers of my right hand is a serious matter indeed. It makes a cripple of me for life. Don't talk of your troubles; I would change places with you any day. No, no, my lad; keep a good heart till I see you again."

The carriage rolled away; Augustus followed it for some distance.

"And so this is my reward," said Hoier to himself as he gazed sorrowfully at his mutilated hand. "Yes, the horse has earned his oats, but another eats them; I made sure I should receive the cross of the Legion of Honor. And so I stood like a rock to resist the enemy; and who are they that have received the rib-

bon? Cowardly fools, who bent themselves double before every bullet that whizzed past them, and were glad of any mean shift to save their precious lives."

Augustus would gladly have given up all the orders in the world, had he possessed them, for the sake of returning to his native country. He watched the carriage with a bleeding heart till it was out of sight.

Moscow now presented a scene of awful confusion; thousands of different things lay piled together in the streets. Large mirrors, splendid curtains, and costly furniture of all kinds, were mingled with beds, provisions, boxes, casks, bales, and bundles, thrown from the burning houses; all together formed a miscellaneous mass, that was not only itself endangered by the raging fire, but which served to increase its rapidity and aggravate its fury.

The French looked upon this scene of destruction with perfect indifference; they seemed to have lost all thought or care for the future. At length the conflagration reached such a height that their lives were endangered. They withdrew to the buildings that still remained untouched by the fire; and there they were compelled to crowd inconveniently together. In

the meantime they hoped that peace would soon be concluded ; day after day they looked for this. But alas ! they were grievously disappointed. Four weeks passed away, and still their expectations were not realized. In the midst of so much treasure, they began to suffer from the want of those common necessities of life which they had but lately so prodigally wasted. No food could be procured in the whole country round ; the villages were all burnt ; no country people could be seen bringing their wares to the city, nor was it possible in any way to obtain the necessary supplies.

Napoleon was at last compelled by necessity to give orders for a retreat. But even retreat in this instance afforded them no relief ; unfortunately there was no way open to the troops but that over which they had already passed. All here was desolate and waste ; no shelter, no provisions, were to be met with ; whilst, in addition to these calamities, they were distressed by very rough weather ; winter having this autumn set in early, and with unusual severity.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE RETREAT.

THE cutting wind had deprived the trees of their leaves, and withered the grass; the ground was frozen hard as a threshing-floor; dense clouds veiled the sky, and very soon a thick sleet began to fall. In a short time everything was covered with it. The French army marched along the high road in innumerable companies. They left Moscow laden with booty; yet merriment and laughter were no longer heard in their ranks. They proceeded on their way silently and sorrowfully; not a word escaped their lips, except when some new disaster called forth an angry oath. Their eyes were sunk deep in their heads, and their faces were pale and emaciated; yet these were the same troops which, a quarter of a year before, had dazzled and enchanted all spectators by the splendour and completeness of their equipments. Now

their splendour had vanished, and their discipline given place to disorder.

Instead of gilded helmets and furred shakos, many wore frightful caps of skin bordered with fur. Others had their heads, shoulders, and breasts enveloped in costly carpets and shawls. Their ragged cloaks did not even serve to conceal their soiled uniforms, so numerous were the holes that had been burnt and worn in them.

The poor horses belonging to the cavalry had hardly sufficient strength left to enable them to carry their burdens; and so thin had they become, that one might have counted their ribs. The continued wet produced by the snow ruined the soldiers' boots, so that many of them had to march either on their stockings or on their bare feet. The exhilarating sound of music was no longer heard, nor the joyous clamor of the trumpets. Twelve weary horses were harnessed to every piece of artillery; and even then it was only by the incessant use both of whip and spur that they could be made to drag it along.

When noon arrived, no hospitable house, no well-covered tables, no refreshing meal, awaited them; no warming soup, no salad, no meat, no

pudding. How the sight of these things, which they had once despised, would now have rejoiced their hearts! Even the black dry ammunition bread had failed, so thoughtlessly and wickedly had they wasted it. The soldiers would now quietly open their knapsacks, and rummage their contents, in hopes of finding something to eat; and greedily would they munch away at a piece of stale biscuit or mouldy horse-flesh, if fortunate enough to find any.

If any of their number ventured to leave the high road to search in the neighborhood for food, they rarely returned; the infuriated Russian peasants were hovering around them on all sides, and they slew without mercy every straggler that fell into their hands.

The setting sun was the harbinger of fresh calamities to the unfortunate soldiers; the fearful nights, long and cold as they were, inspired every one with the deepest horror. Each night many could not survive these hardships. If, as the darkness came on, a soldier, overcome by fatigue, stumbled, and was unable to raise himself, no comrade would render him any assistance. Unsympathizing, they would pass him by; and soon the thick-falling snow would cover him, and his resting-place be marked only

by a white hillock; beneath which he would sink into a sound sleep, from which he never awoke. Those who came after stumbled perhaps over the body; and, weary as they were, they did not leave it till they had searched the knapsack. If it contained any treasure, it was added to their own load; but this double burden was sure, in a few days, to bring a similar fate upon them.

As the severity of the weather increased, their sufferings were terrible. When, perhaps, after several days' march, they at length reached a town, they found only ruins. The houses were without roofs, windows, doors, or stoves. They had destroyed and wasted all on their previous march; and bitterly must they now have repented the wanton havoc they had made.

When they halted for the night, most of the soldiers sank down upon the ground overpowered with weariness; whilst the few who had sufficient strength left, dragged themselves with difficulty in search of wood with which to kindle a fire.

Then the poor frozen soldiers crowded eagerly round the flame, like moths round a candle; endeavoring to get a little warmth into their benumbed limbs. As they lay upon the ground,

they insensibly drew nearer and nearer to the comforting element. Nor did they remark the smell when their clothes were singed by the fire; nor did they even feel, though their frost-bitten feet should burn from contact with the flame.

Profound slumber soon overpowered them. The falling snow extinguished the fires, and the lives of many of the sleepers passed away with it. When, in the morning, the trumpet summoned them to resume their march, but few arose from that circle of frozen bodies, which remained unburied till the spring.

The horses, too, were no better off. They had no comfortable stables with which to pass the night, and all the nourishment they could get was a little hay. They consequently soon lost all their strength, and fell dying on every side. In one single night no less than six thousand were frozen. The cavalry were therefore compelled to go on foot, and all the horses that remained were harnessed to the cannon and ammunition wagons.

How clearly now was manifested the almighty power of God, and the utter weakness of man! The five hundred thousand warriors with which Napoleon expected to conquer the world were

scattered like dust, not before other warriors, but before the cold wind of heaven.

It was not in the power of man to lessen the severity of the weather, or even to obtain the supply of one day's provision for the troops. The generals and officers could no longer keep their soldiers in order. Misery and want dissolved all the bands of obedience, fear, and submission. The warriors forsook their colors, rested, and proceeded as they pleased. Altogether, the army resembled an unravelled ball of variegated thread. Their route was marked by dead men and horses, forsaken wagons, cannons, weapons thrown aside, and plunder of all kinds.

A hundred thousand men were already thus destroyed. Augustus still lived ; he was well, and had scarcely suffered at all from hunger or cold. For this he was in a great measure indebted to Marie. Before they set out, she had given him several useful directions, especially with regard to the climate of Russia. Following her advice, he had, before they left Moscow, provided himself with stout, well-made boots, woolen stockings, and warm coats and trousers. He also put a few pounds of chocolate into his knapsack, to be reserved for a time of necessity.

His youth, gentle demeanor, and obliging disposition, often enabled him to procure provisions when others could not. He marched cheerfully with the little band that was now all that remained of his regiment. His good health, at a time when almost all beside were suffering, excited the envy of his less fortunate companions. The drummer especially who had murdered his little sister regarded him with angry and vindictive feelings. The ill-will which he had entertained against the father of Augustus on account of the wound he had received, was now directed towards the innocent child. It was a happy thing for Augustus that cold and suffering had so diminished his strength, as to leave him unable to execute his evil designs, or the little drummer would have fared badly.

They had left the ruined fortress of Smolensk far behind them, when, as usual, the troops took up their quarters for the night in the open air. Augustus, as the strongest of his band, went in search of wood. He soon made a good fire, upon which the soldiers cooked some thin pieces of horse flesh. Augustus had still a considerable portion of his chocolate remaining. He had wished for some days to prepare from it a warm and nourishing drink for himself; but he

was obliged to wait until he could do it secretly, knowing that otherwise his companions would wrest it from him by main force. Waiting, therefore, until he thought they were all asleep, he placed his little cup upon the fire, and cooked and brewed with great satisfaction. He was just upon the point of tasting the draught he had prepared, when his wicked comrade moved.

“Ah!” he exclaimed, “that smells very delicious. Is it chocolate? Let me see, my fine fellow.” So saying, he rose up as quickly as his weakness would permit.

Augustus was very much startled. When he saw the disturber of his peace tottering towards him, a violent conflict arose in his soul. Should he spare any of his chocolate for Emily’s murderer?

“Comrade,” he said at length, “I will share with you, though I have but little remaining.”

“What’s that? What do you mean by that? Share indeed!” returned the other with disdain. “I share with no one! Give me the dainty!” He greedily seized the cup with both hands, and at one draught swallowed the whole of its contents.

Augustus looked at him with intense rage.

He felt himself quite strong enough to throw the weakened scoundrel into the flames as he cowered over them. His arms already trembled with eagerness to accomplish the deed. He had raised his foot to assist him in throwing the wretch down. But just then he looked at the deep blue sky above his head. The stars were shining brilliantly. The moon at that moment, in all her loveliness, appeared from behind a dark cloud. He thought of the God who had made these glorious objects, and his angry passions were calmed. He thought to himself, "It is better to suffer evil than to commit evil;" and he quietly lay down beside his sleeping comrades, using his knapsack as a pillow. Sleep soon closed his eyes, and he for a time forgot his sorrow.

When he awoke the following morning, he found himself covered with snow; and on shaking it off, he perceived that he was also alone. His comrades had disappeared, and with them his knapsack. From the peculiar manner in which the snow was heaped upon him, he felt certain that it had been purposely placed there, apparently with a view to prevent his being seen by the others. He had no doubt that the same person had done this who had

stolen his chocolate and his knapsack—namely, the wicked drummer.

Looking round him, he saw numbers of dead bodies, but not a living creature. He pursued his journey, and after some hours' traveling, arrived at a spot which was familiar to him. Surely it must be the village in which Marie's parents had formerly lived? There lay the heap of ruins marking the spot where the mill had stood. Only the stones and the iron-work remained. All the wood that had been left unconsumed by the first fire had been burnt up by the retreating army. The uncovered walls might have served on the previous night as a shelter to some of the soldiers—at least so he imagined, from the fresh ashes and the dead bodies, not yet covered with snow, that lay around.

Augustus found himself sadly deceived in his expectations. He had hoped to find the village, or at least the mill, rebuilt, and occupied by Marie and her parents. He had anticipated a kind reception and cordial welcome from them. But no traces of them were to be seen.

He felt the calls of hunger, but could find no bread in his pockets. He looked round him with anxious eyes; nothing, however, could he

see but a dead horse frozen quite hard, from which many of the best pieces had been cut away. He could not fancy such a meal. Perhaps, thought he, there may be something eatable in these knapsacks that lie scattered in all directions. With some trouble, he managed to untie the strings with his frozen fingers, and eagerly rummaged their contents. In some he found gold ; in others silver ; but in none what he most wanted—food. How willingly would he have exchanged fifty pieces of gold for a dish of warm food !

A carriage with broken wheels lay, almost covered with snow, in the little hollow through which the river flowed. In searching, Augustus found many boxes lying about, some broken and others quite uninjured, the contents of which were very heavy.

“Money, money, nothing but money!” sighed the poor boy. “Oh if these had but contained biscuits, or even flour!” And again he continued his search.

A wagon, to which an emaciated frozen horse was harnessed, now attracted his attention. The snow was drifted into it, and everything inside was incrustated with a hard coating of ice. Augustus exerted all his strength to pull out some

clothes. One large bundle resisted all his efforts. He was obliged to take his sword to assist him, in order to examine its contents.

What a sight met his eyes when he had succeeded! There lay a young woman, wasted to a skeleton, with sunken cheeks and hollow eyes. At her breast was an infant, clothed in rags, and tightly enclosed in her mother's arms. She had evidently tried to protect her child from the severe, un pitying frost, and had exposed herself, in order to give warmth to the babe. The tiny head rested calmly upon her breast, which had ceased to beat. The child's heart was also still. Both had passed away in their sleep.

Augustus had seen so much misery and death, that they were quite familiar to him. But this scene was so touching, that he shed tears of real sorrow, and turned quickly away.

His tormenting feeling of hunger, however, compelled him to return to the spot. With trembling hands he searched the wagon for provisions. At length he discovered a large bag of gray linen, full of something that promised to reward his efforts. On opening it, he found half of its contents to be oats, and the other half flour. What joy! He also found a tin

saucepan. With the addition of some melted snow, he now prepared a mess of porridge, which, though it was unseasoned by either salt or butter, tasted to him most delicious ; for hunger is always the best seasoning. Having thus satisfied his craving hunger, Augustus felt that he could think of other things. He had collected as much gold as he could carry without inconvenience, when a happy thought came into his head. He remembered the little stone vault in which he had been concealed with Marie during the burning of the mill. There he carried all the money he could find, and rolled it carefully in sundry knapsacks and packages. "There," thought he, "will be enough to rebuild the mill, and something more besides." His greatest treasure, however, the bag of meal, he placed in an empty knapsack, and marched off with it upon his shoulders.

In the evening of the same day he came up with the hindermost troops ; they were encamped in the neighborhood of a dark wood. He wandered through the ranks, in hopes of getting amongst some of his own countrymen. As he passed along, an imploring voice arrested him. He looked up, and saw a soldier sitting beside his horse, and dressed in a very singular

style. His clothes were partly those of a man, and partly of a woman. A large gown covered his legs, and partly concealed a richly-ornamented but soiled and tattered uniform. A coarse woollen horse-cloth served him as a shawl and a wrapper, whilst his head was bound round several times as if with a turban. His fragments of boots were kept together by wisps of straw. He was reclining upon the body of the horse, in order to gather some heat from it.

“Comrade,” he said in French, “have you anything to eat? I implore you to give me just a little morsel of something.”

Augustus stood silent, and considered whether he should grant his petition.

“Ah,” he said to himself, “I have to-day, for the first time these many days, made a hearty meal; let me not forget what the Bible says, ‘To do good, and to distribute, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.’ Wait a little,” he added aloud, “I will go and light a fire.”

He then quickly cut down some branches of fir-trees with his sabre, and managed to kindle a capital fire with them. It was not without great trouble that he accomplished this. The

branches were covered with ice, and very damp ; but after many vain attempts, they kindled.

Augustus now filled his tin pot with snow, and melted it over the fire. This he had to do repeatedly before it was filled with water. When it began to boil, he shook the oats and meal into it, and cooked them both together.

“But,” said Augustus to his neighbor, who kept his eyes fixed on the smoking mess, “I have neither salt nor lard.”

The latter searched in the breast-pocket of his uniform and produced something carefully folded in paper, which he handed to Augustus, saying, “There, comrade ; there is some lard.”

What did Augustus find on opening it? A piece of tallow candle ! While he was adding this delicious morsel to his pottage, the Frenchman gave him another paper, which he said contained salt.

Had he not said so, Augustus would have imagined it to be a small sausage folded up. But it was really only a cartridge containing gunpowder, and even this was stirred up with the other contents of the pot.

And now Augustus gave an iron spoon to his guest, who ate six spoonfuls with great avidity. Then came Augustus’ turn ; but a sudden light

had come into his mind whilst the Frenchman was eating. The fire was now burning clearly, and by its steady light he could better distinguish his features. In spite of the disfigurement of his face, he recognized the general who had been the cause of his being shot. The general himself became aware of this. He had little imagined that his benefactor was the despised drummer, who, he thought, had long since been numbered with the dead.

Augustus now enjoyed a peculiar feeling of satisfaction. The thought that he had rendered good for evil, had done a kindness to his enemy, was unspeakably sweet to him. In his sweet pleasure he would have forgotten to eat, had not the general pressed him, saying, "Eat yourself, comrade; it tastes capitally." Augustus obeyed, and ate as many spoonfuls as the general had done. He then gave up the spoon again; and so they continued until the saucepan was empty.

The general then invited him to sit down by his side, and lean against his horse. He complied, and was just sinking to sleep, when the fearful cry arose, "The Cossacks!—the Cossacks!"

Then was heard the shrieking of men, the

firing of muskets, and the trampling of horses. All was confusion.

The general sprang upon his weary horse, and was quickly out of sight.

Augustus crept beneath some branches that had not yet fed the fire, and waited patiently until the tumult had subsided. He never saw the general again.

CHAPTER XV.

THE PASSAGE OF THE BEREZINA.

THE army at length reached the shores of the Berezina. There were but two wretched bridges by which the river could be crossed, and these were quickly crowded with fugitives, and with carriages of all descriptions. Each endeavored to be first, and none would give precedence to the others. In consequence of this tumultuous struggling for priority, the way soon became absolutely impassable. Both bridges were stopped up with horses, cannons, powder-vans, carriages, and men. Near one end of this scene of confusion stood a carriage without horses; they had been disengaged, and taken away by force, to assist in removing some of the artillery wagons.

In this carriage lay a man so dreadfully wounded as to be perfectly helpless. It was the colonel.

"Save yourselves," he said in a sorrowful

voice, addressing Marie, who was by his side, and Hoier, who occupied the box. "Leave me to my fate. I have at least learned to look death in the face, and it matters little whether he come to me with a knout or a sword in his hand."

"No, no, colonel," returned Hoier; "that man must be a bad soldier who would leave the father of his regiment under such circumstances. Besides, here we are like a mouse in a trap; we cannot move forwards or backwards, whether we wish it or no. We must wait till the enemy make room for us with their bullets."

The colonel only answered with a deep sigh.

"Are you hungry, my child?" he inquired of Marie.

She shook her head, although she had eaten nothing the whole day. Night came on. The confusion increased most awfully. It attained its height on the morning of the following day, when the Russians commenced showering a heavy rain of bullets upon them. Thousands upon thousands were dashed in pieces, crushed, trodden down, or driven over. Save yourselves!" now became the universal cry. Without pity or remorse the French then killed all their sick and wounded. The weak women and

children were ruthlessly dragged from their carriages, which the soldiers then heaped together, and set on fire.

As some of them approached the carriage in which the colonel was lying, with the intention of serving him in the same way, Hoier started in a rage from his seat on the coach-box.

"Comrades," he cried, "are you going to broil us like a parcel of steaks? Here lies our valiant colonel, who has fought seven battles with us, and received thirteen wounds for the Emperor. Have you no regard for an officer of the Legion of Honor? Let him at least die peacefully in his carriage. Respect the coffin of a brave man."

The soldiers, some of whom understood German, spoke a few words to each other, and then turned away. Hoier watched them attentively.

"Marie!" he quickly cried out, "do you see what those fellows are doing to the powder wagons?"

"No," returned she.

"Can't you see anything? My eyes are become so weak."

"I see," replied Marie, "a light smoke rising, as if from a lighted paper."

“Just as I thought,” muttered Hoier between his teeth. “God help us then !”

“The bridges are on fire !” shouted a number of voices at once, and a general shriek of horror rose.

“We are lost !” was re-echoed from mouth to mouth.

“True enough,” said Hoier ; “’twill very soon be over now. In a short time we shall burn fast enough. At all events we sha’n’t die of cold. I think perhaps it is almost the best thing they could have done for us. We shall be soon out of our trouble. And yet,” he added, “one ought to do all that he can to escape death ; and I am so sorry for this poor innocent child ! But what can be done ? If I were to leave the carriage, I could never make my way to the powder wagons with these wounded hands, nor could Marie either. It is worth trying though, whether I can make any one understand me, and get them to remove the match. At any rate I shall have done all that I can do.”

“Here !” he cried, exerting his powerful voice to the utmost. “The powder wagons are on fire ! Is there any one who will save us all

by taking away the match that those French rascals have placed there?"

These words had the very opposite effect to what Hoier intended. A universal panic seized the multitude. Each one tried by instant flight to escape the threatened explosion. None remained behind but those who were half-dead, and as helpless as themselves. There was consequently room to move; but so much time had been lost, that Hoier deemed escape impossible. He expected the explosion every instant.

"Are you afraid to die?" he now asked of Marie.

"No," answered the little girl; "for then I should go to heaven, and never be hungry and cold any more."

"You are right, my child," said Hoier, quite affected. "Pray to God to give us all a happy death. All will be over with us now very soon."

"Speak out," said he, as Marie, with her hands clasped, repeated her prayers in silence. "I must take my part in it too."

Marie began again, and this time Hoier did not interrupt her, as her gentle voice pronounced the words, "Our Father which art in heaven," &c. But suddenly she stopped, and with a joy-

ous voice cried out, "Augustus!—there comes Augustus!"

She nearly jumped into his arms as he approached.

"That boy again!" said Hoier, laughing and crying at the same instant. "Are you still alive? Throw yourself down on the ground; you may yet escape death. The match laid to the ammunition wagons must be nearly burnt away by this time. I must confess I should like to live a little longer. Would not you, Marie? And you too, my brave boy? I am sure the colonel would revive at the very sight of the rogue."

But whilst he was thus chattering, Augustus had run towards the wagon, and in a moment snatched away the match. He was but just in time to prevent the powder from igniting. Then carefully closing the top of the wagon, he hastened back to his companions.

And now, in the midst of death and destruction, three persons might be found so filled with joy at meeting each other again, that they quite forgot the horrors that surrounded them. The colonel, however, felt neither pain nor pleasure. He lay perfectly insensible to all that passed.

But they were soon recalled to their circum-

stances. Increasing showers of cannon balls exposed them every instant to danger. One of them crashed through the colonel's carriage. The splinters of the damaged hind-wheel flew in all directions, and some of them struck Augustus on the head. The carriage with its heavy contents, fell upon his right leg, and broke it. His senses forsook him, and he fainted.

When he came to himself again, it was night; but the full moon was shining brightly. All was quiet around him; as also in the carriage, which still lay on his leg. But he heard a hollow noise at some distance, which he at length found proceeded from the Russian soldiers, who were then plundering the carriages which the French had piled together into a barricade, and securing what prisoners they could.

Augustus felt that he must have immediate assistance, whether it came from friend or foe. Having in vain endeavored to extricate his leg from the shattered carriage, he began to shout. No one heard him. Looking around, he perceived his drum, which had accompanied him everywhere, lying by his side. Glad to find some means of making himself heard, he drew out his sticks, and began to beat a thundering

tattoo. The sound echoed amidst the stillness of the night, and soon he found it had produced some effect in the carriage.

He heard something moving, and then Hoier's deep voice said angrily, "Surely, captain, you will let me hang up my cartridge-box first?"

Marie, too, wept, and cried out convulsively, "Bend down, Augustus, that the bullets may not touch you."

Even the colonel was roused, and muttered indistinctly, "Forward, my boys; at them again; strike down all before you!"

The noise of the drum had also called back to consciousness a dying man who was stretched out near Augustus. A ball had entered his body. His distorted face was deadly white, and the pale moonlight gave a ghastly appearance to his half-opened eyes; his limbs shook with the extreme cold, and his teeth chattered as his dying lips gave utterance to the following words:—

"I didn't do it this time; 'twas the devil did it; I only did it once. How could I know that the noise would kill the child? Woman, let me go, I say; you are strangling me!"

With wild gestures he laid hold of the bodies around him, and then sank down quite dead.

The drumsticks fell from Augustus' hands. The murderer of his dear little sister—the thief who had stolen his knapsack—his harsh, bitter enemy—had at length received the reward of his crimes! And all the past circumstances rushed vividly before his mind as he gazed at the stiffening corpse.

In the meantime a detachment of Russian soldiers approached the young drummer. Marie had recovered from her fright, and as she recognised in the Russian drummer one of Augustus' pupils, she joyfully said, "Bibskoff, look to your master. Don't you know us again?"

Her appeal to the Russians was the means of procuring a more endurable lot for her companions than for the other prisoners. It is true they were robbed of the money they happened to have about them; but they were more carefully tended, till at length they were conveyed to a Russian hospital; and gradually the three wounded prisoners were restored to perfect health.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE RETURN.

ONE summer and two winters had passed away; most of the houses in Marie's native village had been rebuilt; and even the little church again stood there. The mill, however, still lay a heap of ruins. Spring had arrived, bringing with it the fresh grass, and the feathered songsters of the fields and trees; all traces of war had disappeared; save that here and there the whitened ribs or skulls of some of the unfortunate horses might be seen.

At noon, one bright sunny day, a Russian vehicle drove into the village and stopped at the spot formerly occupied by the mill. Nau-man the miller got out of it, and assisted his wife and two children to alight. Then he stood with folded arms before the wreck of his property, thinking with bitter sorrow of the past. His wife and children came to his side.

“Well,” he at length said, “here we are again ; but where is the money to rebuild the mill?”

“Husband,” returned his wife, “I cannot endure the sight of our Marie’s tomb ; I can hear her cries now as they rent my heart on that terrible night. I do not believe I could rest a night here.” And the poor woman wept bitterly as she spoke.

“I feel just as you do,” said Naumau ; “but what else can we do ? I would willingly return to my native country ; for since I would not burn my mill to please them, it is not very likely that we shall receive a hearty welcome from our former neighbors here. But I cannot go back utterly destitute ; the money I might receive for the piece of ground would be a mere nothing.”

In the meantime a company of men, all dressed alike, entered the principal street of the village. They were German prisoners of war, who had been liberated, and were now returning home. Under their overcoats of coarse cloth they wore the remains of their uniforms, and in their hands they carried walking-sticks, which they had cut from the forest. As they drew near the bridge, some of the men left the others, and walked up to the mill. These were Au-

gustus, the colonel, and Hoier, accompanied by Marie. As soon as the latter perceived her parents, she sprang into her mother's arms. At first they were speechless from joy and surprise. Scarcely could they believe their eyes, at finding her alive whom they had so long mourned as dead. It was an affecting scene. Augustus, Marie's preserver, was overwhelmed with thanks, praises, and blessings by the miller's family.

"But," said Naumau, "I cannot offer you any reward for your noble action; the war has robbed me of everything; I am, indeed, little better than a beggar."

At these words Augustus slipped away unperceived into the little vault. He would not say anything of his hidden treasure until he had convinced himself that it was safe. After moving away the fragments he had himself so carefully placed upon it, he found, to his no small delight, the knapsack—indeed decayed and useless, and the money-box rotted, but the gold secure and untouched. After he had put a small sum into his own pocket, he returned to the open air. Young as Augustus was, he had learned many lessons by experience; and knowing that money often severs the best

friends, he thought it best to secure a certain portion of the treasure before he spoke of it to the others. Then, with the delight that every one feels who has a good piece of news to announce, he joined his companions, and told his tale to them.

“During our retreat I concealed a good quantity of money, and if you please we will share it between us. Marie’s father shall receive a third part as possessor of the ground in which the treasure lies. The remaining two-thirds we will take for our portion. Are you all satisfied with this arrangement?”

“For my part,” said the colonel, “I shall be satisfied with just enough to take me home. I have wealth sufficient when I get there; and therefore, my good boy, I will not deprive you of any more of your hoard.”

Hoier looked at his hands, which possessed but three half and two whole fingers, and then he said, “I cannot work, and I am ashamed to beg, so, my lad, I must accept your offer. Let it be a bargain.”

The miller and his wife seemed almost beside themselves; they laughed and wept for joy, and overwhelmed the young treasure-finder with their gratitude. And now the money was care-

fully stowed away in the carriage, that it might not be perceived by the inhabitants. The whole party then mounted, and bade the village farewell forever. The delighted miller had now made up his mind to return to his native country. He would be able to purchase a first-rate mill with his share of the treasure. It was agreed that the division should be made in the next place they came to, and a carriage be procured likewise. The three prisoners of war got in the last. Those who were returning on foot looked at them with envy, and one of them implored the colonel to let him accompany them. He was the same lieutenant who had treated Hoier and Augustus so haughtily, but he was now humbled and submissive.

“Herr von Seestein,” answered the colonel, “the carriage does not belong to me, but to my comrades; if they will consent, I will not place any obstacles in the way.”

The lieutenant made a humble petition to his former subordinates, who cheerfully granted his request, and accommodated him the best way they could.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CONCLUSION.

MR. WERNER was in his work-shop, which was situated near the yard of his house. He was standing at the work-table cutting out leather, and was alone in his occupation. There would have been no room for assistants even had he had any, for the whole place was filled with furniture and bedding. The principal part of his things had been disposed of, and what remained betokened great necessity.

It was in the beginning of May, 1814, and nearly twelve o'clock. The door opened, and a traveler entered. "God bless you, friend Werner!" said he as he came into the room.

Werner looked up. His sorrowful face brightened; and giving the new-comer a hearty shake of the hand, he said with astonishment, "Ah, my old school-fellow Naumau, are you come to see us once more? It is not often you

do so. Where have you hidden yourself so long?"

"In Russia," answered Naumau. "I had built a mill there, and married comfortably; but since the French chose to burn it, I have returned, bringing my whole family with me."

"And what are you thinking of doing now?" inquired Werner anxiously.

"I shall either buy a mill or take a farm."

"Have you any money?" asked Werner.

"No; but I have kind friends, who will be answerable for me; you, for example, are well to do—have a fine house, good trade, and credit. Surely you can do something for me?"

Werner smiled bitterly as he replied, "Poor fellow-sufferer! you are very much mistaken. Once I had all you mention, but I have them no longer. Look at this wretched remnant of my former prosperity. This work-shop is my only dwelling, and to-morrow even that will be wanting. The house will be sold to pay my debts, and I must leave it for ever. Yes, friend Naumau, the war has robbed me of all my property, and even more than that."

"How can that be?" asked Naumau incredulously.

"Because it has deprived me of two of my

children," returned Werner gloomily. He went to a door, as he spoke, opening into a dark apartment, that served as a kind of kitchen, and said, "Dear wife, come here. A friend has come to see us, and little Emily is awake. Will you feed her, that she may not disturb us by her crying?"

Madame Werner came in, welcomed the stranger, and went to the cradle to take up her little daughter.

"At any rate you have a sweet child there," said Naumau.

"True," returned Werner; "but I would much rather it had been a boy. Then it should have been called Augustus."

"Why—don't you love the little girl?"

"Indeed I do," answered Werner; "all the more because, through her, God has restored our Emily to us. But my Augustus"—

The poor man could not finish his sentence, but walked to the window to conceal his tears. "What of your Augustus?" asked his friend sympathizingly.

"He suffered death instead of me—a cruel death in a foreign land," sobbed Werner. "Yes," added he, "that dear child is lost to us for ever in this world."

"Where, and how did he die?" Naumau asked, after a short pause.

"Do not ask me any more!" implored Werner. "You must yourself either have seen or heard in what a horrible manner the soldiers were cut off in Russia by war, hunger, nakedness, and cold. My son died with them."

"But are you quite sure of that?" asked Naumau. "Many German prisoners of war are now returning from Russia, and I have myself a letter from a young drummer to his parents in this place to deli"—

"From a young drummer?—in this town?" cried Werner and his wife with one voice, changing color as they spoke. Both trembled from excitement.

"Yes," returned Naumau calmly, putting his hand into his pocket.

Werner snatched the letter from him. "This is my son's handwriting!" shouted he, almost beside himself with joy; and his impatience was so great, that he nearly tore the letter instead of opening it.

The cup flew from Madame Werner's hand as she suddenly rose from the chair, unmindful of the infant's screams at the loss of her meal. She ran to her husband's side, that she might

see as much as possible of the beloved handwriting.

The letter contained these few words :—

“ MY BELOVED PARENTS—I am alive and well. In another minute I shall be with you.

Your loving AUGUSTUS.”

The door opened. “ Augustus is coming !— Augustus is coming !” shouted Robert and Bertha, while, with their books in one hand, they drew their brother into the room with the other.

When the tumult had a little subsided, Augustus said, “ I have brought one remembrance for you from Russia, which we will always keep ;” and he drew out his drum-sticks. “ I saved them. The drum I was obliged to leave behind in Russia.”

“ There is another little remembrance,” said Hoier laughing, as he pointed to the table, where the men had silently placed the bags of money.

“ That is not all mine !” said Augustus quickly, when he had counted the numbers.

“ I have taken the liberty,” continued Hoier, “ of adding my share to it. I thought, perhaps, your good parents would be able to find a little

room in their house for an old soldier who is very easily satisfied. Though he has lost his fingers, he can at any rate manage to rock a cradle, and see that the little ones don't get into mischief. The colonel has consented that I should stay with my adopted son, and has given me my discharge."

"And we," added Naumau, "if you will receive us, will stay with you until we can get a mill. We will forget all our troubles, and make but one family for the present. You have got your house again, and something more into the bargain!"

"This is the best billeting I ever knew," said Werner cheerfully. "You are all heartily welcome. Run, dear wife, and you, dear children; buy the best of everything at the eating-house. But let us first thank God, who has helped us in our trouble, and brought all to a happy conclusion. 'Tis indeed a joyful ending for such a sorrowful beginning. God be praised for it! And may war, with all its horrors, never come back to us again!"



The Boatswain's Son.

The Little German Drummer-Boy, p. 171.

Frontispiece of Part II.

THE BOATSWAIN'S SON.

CHAPTER I.

THE BATTLE.

IT was on the memorable 1st of June. A sea fight ever to be renowned in history was raging between the fleets of England and France. The great guns were thundering and roaring, musketry was rattling, round shot, and chain shot, and grape, and langridge, and missiles of every description, invented for carrying on the bloody game of war, were hissing through the air, crashing against the sides of the ships, rending them asunder, shattering the tall masts and spars, sending their death-dealing fragments flying around, and hurling to the deck, mangled and bleeding, the gallant seamen as they stood at their quarters in all the pride of manhood, fighting for the honor and glory of their respective countries. A dark canopy hung over

the scene, every moment increasing in density as the guns belched forth their flashes of flame and clouds of smoke, filling the pure air of heaven with sulphureous vapors, and almost concealing the fierce combatants from each other's gaze.

"Who is that brave youngster?" asked the captain of the renowned 'Marlborough,' a seventy-four, which lay hotly engaged surrounded by foes in the thick of the fight; "I never saw a cooler thing or better timed."

"The son of Mr. Ripley the boatswain, sir," was the answer.

"I must have my eye on him, there is stuff in that lad," observed the captain. The deed which had called forth this remark was certainly well worthy of praise. The "Marlborough" had for some time been furiously engaged, almost broadside to broadside, with the "Impetueux," a French seventy-four, which ship had just fallen aboard, the Frenchman's bowsprit becoming entangled in her mizzen rigging. To keep her antagonist in that position was of the greatest consequence to the "Marlborough," as she might thus rake her fore and aft, receiving but little damage in return. An officer and two or three men

sprang into the "Marlborough's" mizzen rigging to secure the bowsprit to it. The French small-arm men rushed forward to prevent this being done, by keeping up a fire of musketry. The two seamen fell. The lieutenant still hung in the rigging, but the rope with which he was lashing the bowsprit to it was shot from his hand; no other was within reach. Having just delivered the powder he had brought from below, young Ripley was watching the proceeding. Seizing a rope he sprang into the rigging unhurt amid a shower of bullets, and handed it to the brave officer. Together they made the required turns for lashing it fast, and descended to the deck in safety. The young powder-boy then resuming his tub was speedily again seen at his station, composedly sitting on the top of it as if he had performed no unusual deed. The "Marlborough" had soon another antagonist, the "Mucius," seventy-four, which fell aboard her on the bow, the three ships thus forming a triangle, of which the British ship was the base. With these two opponents, each more powerful than she was, the "Marlborough" continued the seemingly unequal fight, but the stout arms and hearts of her crew made amends for their inferiority in numbers.

Her mizzen-mast fell soon after the "Mucius" engaged her, her fore and main-masts followed, and the Frenchmen began to hope that victory was to be theirs. So well, however, did her crew work their guns, that they quickly shot away the bowsprit and all the lower masts of the "Impetueux," those of the "Mucius" soon sharing the same fate. At this juncture another French ship, the "Montagne," passing under the "Marlborough's" stern, fired a broadside into her of round shot and langridge, killing many of her brave crew, and wounding among others her captain, though receiving but a few shots in return. The first battle in that long, protracted, and bloody war was over, and won by England's veteran admiral, Lord Howe; six of the enemy's finest line of battle ships forming the prize of victory, and among them the "Impetueux."

"The "Marlborough's" captain had not forgot the promise he had made to himself in favor of Young Ripley. As he lay wounded in his cabin he sent for the boatswain. The proud father had heard of his son's gallantry, and the captain's words had been repeated to him. It would be difficult to find a finer specimen of a seaman than the boatswain of the "Marl-

borough" presented, as, still in the prime of manhood, he stood, hat in hand, before his captain. By his manner and appearance he looked indeed well fitted for the higher ranks of his profession, but it was his lot to be a boatswain, and he did not complain. With unfeigned satisfaction he heard the account of his son's gallantry and coolness rehearsed by the captain's lips.

"You have always proved yourself to be a brave man and a good officer, and although I have it not in my power to reward you as you deserve, I can your son," said the captain. "Would it be satisfactory to you to see him placed on the quarter-deck?"

The father's heart beat quick; the blush of gratified pride rose to his cheeks as he answered, "It is the thing of all others I should prize. I trust that he will not be found unfitted for the rank to which he may attain if you thus put his foot on the lower ratlins."

"I am glad to have hit the thing to please you, Mr. Ripley," said the captain. "Your son shall at once be rated as a midshipman in the ship's books;" and then he added, a shade of grief passing across his countenance, "He will have no difficulty in getting an outfit from

the kits of the four youngsters who were killed on the 1st. By the by, what is he called?"

"Pearce, sir—Pearce Ripley is his name," answered the boatswain.

"Very well; send my clerk to me, and tell your boy that he is a midshipman. The first lieutenant will introduce him to his new messmates, and secure him a favorable reception," said the captain as the boatswain withdrew.

Pearce Ripley was a fine-looking lad of about fourteen, with an ingenuous countenance and frank manner, which spoke of an honest, brave heart. With the ship's company he had been a general favorite; it was to be proved how far he would recommend himself to the officers.

In the afternoon the young gentlemen, as all the members of the midshipmen's mess were called, were summoned on the quarter-deck, and briefly addressed by Mr. Monckton, the first lieutenant. Pearce Ripley was then sent for, and the boatswain's son had no cause to complain of his reception by those whose messmate he was about to become. They, with one exception, came forward and cordially shook him by the hand, and when he entered the berth they all seemed to vie who should pay him the most unobtrusive attention as forthwith to place

him at his ease. Pearce had gained the respect of his messmates ; he soon won their regard by his readiness to oblige, his good temper, his evident determination not to give or take offence, and his general kind bearing towards all. On duty he showed that he was resolved to merit the good opinion which had been formed of him. The only person who differed from the majority was Harry Verner, a midshipman of about his own age. Though Verner had shaken hands with him, it had been with reluctance and marked coldness. His manner was now haughty and supercilious in the extreme, and he took every opportunity of making sneering remarks about men who had risen from the lower orders always being out of place and never doing any good. "If such were to become customary in the service, it would drive all the gentlemen out of it," he remarked one day in Pearce's hearing. "Not if those who entered it knew how to behave as gentlemen," Pearce replied, quietly. Verner said nothing in return, but he gave a look to show his intense displeasure. Generally Pearce walked away when Verner spoke in that style, or when at table, and he could not move, pretended not to hear what was said.

CHAPTER II.

PROMOTION AND A CRUISE.

THE "Marlborough," though victorious, had received so tremendous a battering from her numerous opponents, that it was very clear the stout craft could not again go to sea without a thorough repair. Her officers and crew were therefore distributed among other ships then fitting out, and thus Pearce, for the first time in his life, was separated from his father, to whom he had always been accustomed to look for guidance and advice. In some respects this might have been an advantage to the young midshipman, but the parting cost both more pains than either confessed. "I am no great preacher, my boy, but remember there's One ever watching over you, and he'll be true to you if you try honestly to be true to him," said the boatswain, as he wrung his son's hand, and stepped down the side of the fine frigate to which Pearce, through the interest of his late

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captain, had been appointed. The crew went tramping round the capstan to the sound of the merry fife, the anchor was away, and under a wide spread of snowy canvass the dashing "Blanche" of thirty-two guns, commanded by the gallant Captain Faulkner, stood through the Needle passage between the Isle of Wight and the main, on her way down channel, bound out to the West Indies. It was a station where hurricanes, yellow fever, and sicknesses, and dangers of all sorts were to be encountered, but it was also one where enemies were to be met with, battles to be fought, prizes to be captured, and prize-money to be made, glory, honor, and promotion to be obtained, and who on board for a moment balanced one against the other?

Several of Pearce's old shipmates were on board the "Blanche," and two of his messmates, from one of whom, Henry Verner, he would rather have been separated; the other, David Bonham, he was very glad to see. Between Bonham and Verner the contrast was very great; for the former, though of excellent family, was the most unpretending fellow possible, free from pride, vanity, and selfishness, and kind-hearted, generous, good-tempered, and the merriest of the merry. The first A. B. who

volunteered for the "Blanche," when he knew Mr. Pearce had been appointed to her, was Dick Rogers, an old friend of his father's, with whom he had served man and boy the best part of his life; and if there was one thing more strongly impressed on Dick's mind than another, it was that John Ripley, the boatswain, ought to have been a post captain. For his father's sake Dick had at first loved Pearce, and now loved him for his own.

Dick Rogers was short and broad in the shoulders, though not fat, with a huge, sandy beard, a clear blue eye, and an honest smile on his lips, and saying that he was a seaman every inch of him, he needs no further description. Verner let it be known, among their new mess-mates, that Pearce Ripley was only the boatswain's son; and hearing this, Bonham took great care to recount to them his gallant act on the 1st of June, and to speak otherwise in his praise. Dick did not fail to make the young midshipman his theme, and there the fact of his parentage was undoubtedly in his favor. "We shall be, no doubt, alongside an enemy some day soon, and then will be seen what stuff the youngsters are made of," was the remark of several on board. They were not wrong in their

prognostications. The Island of Desiderade, near Guadaloupe, was in sight to windward. "A sail on the weather bow!" was shouted by the look-out at the mast's head, always the keenest sighted of the seamen on board in those days.

The frigate made all sail in pursuit of the stranger, a large schooner under French colors. The chase stood into a bay defended by a fort, where she was seen to anchor with springs to her cables. Along the shore a body of troops were also observed to be posted. The drum beat to quarters as the "Blanche" worked up towards the fort, when, the water shoaling, she anchored and opened her fire in return for that which the fort, the schooner, and the soldiers were pouring in on her. Captain Faulkner's first object was to silence the fort. This was soon done. The schooner, which it was clear was heavily armed, must be brought out. The boats were called away, under command of the second lieutenant. Pearce leaped into the one to which he belonged. A master's mate, Fitzgibbon, had charge of her, and Dick Rogers formed one of her crew. Harry Verner was in another. The Frenchmen worked their guns bravely. A shot disabled the leading boat.

Pearce, sitting by Fitzgibbon's side, heard a deep groan, and before he could even look up, the master's mate fell forward, shot through the head. His boat took the lead. "Now's your time," cried Dick Rogers; "we'll be the first aboard, lads." The crew were not slack to follow the suggestion. In another moment they were up to the schooner, and, leaping on her deck, led by Pearce, laid on them so fiercely with their cutlasses that the Frenchmen, deserting their guns, sprang over the bulwarks into their boats on the other side nearest the shore, and, before another boat reached the vessel, pulled away towards where the troops were marching down to their support. The cables were quickly cut, and amid a shower of bullets sail was made, and the prize carried out. "I said as how he'd do it—I said he would not be wanting," exclaimed Dick Rogers, as he gave his account of the cutting out expedition to his chums on board. "He'll do more too come another occasion." That occasion did occur before many days were over. Two days afterwards the "Blanche" was joined by the "Quebec" frigate, and together, when sailing by Guadaloupe, they discovered the French thirty-six gun frigate "Pique" lying at anchor in the

harbor of Pointe-a-Pitre, ready for sea. Not to deprive his brother captain of the honor he might obtain by engaging an antagonist so worthy of him, Captain Carpenter parted company, and the "Quebec," steering westward, was soon out of sight. The next thing to be done was to get the French frigate to come out from under her protecting batteries to fight. This seemed no easy matter, for prizes were captured and sent away under her very nose, and still she did not venture forth. At length, however, on the memorable evening of the 4th of January, the "Blanche," towing off another prize in triumph, the "Pique" was seen to follow. The sun went down. It was the last many a brave man was destined to see. Darkness had come on, when the French frigate was observed through the gloom astern. The "Blanche" tacked in haste.

In the solemn hour of midnight, while darkness covered the face of the deep, the two vessels approached each other, their relative positions clearly distinguished by the light from the fighting lanterns which streamed from their ports. The British crew, mostly stripped to the waist, stood at their quarters, grim and determined, with the gun-tackles in hand, eager

for the moment to open fire. Pearce was on the quarter-deck. Young as he was, the whizzing of shots and the whistling of bullets scarcely made his heart beat quicker than usual, and yet, as in gloom and silence he waited for the signal when the bloody strife must soon commence, he felt an awe creep over him he had never before experienced. Nearer and nearer the combatants drew to each other. The "Pique" commenced the fight. The "Blanche" returned her distant fire; and, after various manœuvres, the two frigates ranged up alongside each other and hotly engaged, broadside to broadside. Fiercely the two crews fought; the French, once having begun, proved themselves no unworthy antagonists. The main and mizen masts of the "Blanche" fell, and the French, seizing the moment, ran alongside and attempted to board. The British crew sprang up to repel them. Among the foremost was Pearce, with Dick Rogers by his side. With their cutlasses they drove the Frenchmen back. Again the guns roared as before. Once more the French ship fell aboard the "Blanche," her bowsprit touching the latter's capstan. Captain Faulkner hurried to secure it there, for the "Pique," thus held, was exposed to the raking

fire of his frigate. Among those who flew to assist him were Pearce Ripley and Dick Rogers, the Frenchman's musketry playing hotly on them. "This is something like what you did in the old 'Marlborough,' sir," said Dick to Pearce, so loud that all might hear him—so many did, and noted the words. Death was busy around them. While he was passing the lashing the young and gallant Captain Faulkner fell to the deck—a musket ball had pierced his heart. That was no time for grieving, even for one well-beloved as the captain. A hawser was being got up from below to secure the enemy's ship; but before it could be used she broke adrift. A cheer, however, burst from their throats as, directly afterwards, the "Blanche," paying off for want of after-sail, the "Pique," while attempting to cross her stern, fell once more aboard her. This time they took good care to secure the bowsprit to the stump of their mainmast; and now, running before the wind, the "Blanche" towing her opponent, the fight was continued with greater fury than ever. In vain the Frenchmen strove to free themselves by cutting the lashings—each time they made the attempt the marines drove them back with their musketry.

Still it seemed doubtful with whom victory would side. The "Blanche" had no stern ports through which guns could be fought; the carpenters were unable to aid them. A bold expedient was proposed. The guns must make ports for themselves through the transome. Firemen with buckets were stationed ready to extinguish the fire which the discharge would create. With a thundering roar the guns sent their shot through the stern, and, the fire being extinguished, they began to play with terrific effect into the bows of the French frigate. Her fore-mast was immediately shot away; her mizen-mast was seen to fall. Still her crew, getting their quarter-deck guns trained aft, fought on; but what were they to the "Blanche's" heavy guns, which mercilessly raked her, the shot entering her bow and tearing up her deck fore and aft, sweeping away numbers of her crew at each discharge. "If those Mounseers are not made of iron, they'll not stand this battering much longer," cried Dick Rogers, who was working one of the after-guns. Pearce was standing near him. The space between the decks was filled with smoke, through which the twinkling light of the lanterns could scarcely penetrate, the flashes at each discharge showing

the men, begrimed with powder, with sponge and rammers ready to load, or with their tackles to run in their guns. A cheer from the deck told them that the Frenchman's remaining mast had fallen, and now another and another that the foe had struck. The "Pique" was totally dismasted; the "Blanche" had but her foremast standing. Every boat was knocked to pieces, and how to get on board the prize, still towed by the hawser, was the question. "The hawser must form our bridge," cried Mr. Milne, the second lieutenant of the ship, springing on to it, followed by Pearce, Rogers, and several men. Their weight brought the rope down into the water. For some distance they had to swim till they could climb up by it on board. What havoc and destruction a few short hours had wrought. Of a crew not far short of three hundred men, one-third lay dead or wounded, the deck covered with gore and the wrecks of the masts and spars; guns lay dismounted, bulwarks knocked away, all telling the tale of the bravery and hardihood of both the combatants. Such was one of the scenes through which young Ripley fought his way upwards, and gained a name and fame.

CHAPTER III.

THE SHIPWRECK.

THE "Blanche" was soon refitted and at sea again. Several prizes were made, and greatly to his satisfaction, he was appointed to the command of one of them, with Bonham as his mate, and Dick Rogers as boatswain. She was a richly-laden West Indiaman, recaptured from the enemy. He was ordered to take her to England, where, on his arrival, he found his commission waiting for him.

Pearce received a right hearty welcome from his father, and intense was the satisfaction of the brave seaman when his son showed him his commission and appointment as second lieutenant to the "Vestal," an eighteen gun sloop of war, commanded by Captain Gale, and destined for the North American station.

"You have got your first step up the ratlins, Pearce. Go on as you have begun, and Heaven preserving your life, there is no reason why you

shouldn't reach the highest," said the proud father, as he once more parted from his son.

Those were days of press-gangs, and Dick Rogers took good care to hide away till he ascertained the craft Pearce was to join, when he at once volunteered for her. Bonham, who had still a year to serve, was appointed to the same ship. "The "Vestal" had a quick run across the Atlantic till within about five days' sail of Halifax, Nova Scotia, when a heavy gale sprang up, which tried to the utmost her seaworthy qualities. The sloop behaved beautifully, hove to, and rode buoyantly over the raging seas. Well indeed was it for her that she was properly handled, for the gale went on increasing till the oldest seamen on board declared that they had never met with such another. It continued for a week, each day the wind blowing harder and harder, or if there was a lull it seemed to come only that the gale might gain greater strength. For days not a glimpse of sun, or moon, or stars had been obtained. It was the morning watch; the gray cold dawn had just broke. Pearce was on deck, when sweeping his eye round the horizon as the sloop rose to the summit of a sea he perceived on the lee beam the hull of a ship, rising and sink-

ing amid the tumultuous waters. At first he thought she was keel up, but as the light increased he saw that she was a large ship with the stump of the foremast alone remaining. That she was in a bad plight was very clear. She was remarkably low in the water he fancied, and who could say how long even she might keep afloat.

The captain, being summoned, soon came on deck. To bear away for the stranger would be a work of danger to the "Vestal." Still who could tell how many human beings might be on board that sinking ship! With hatches down and men lashed to the helm, the captain resolved to go to the rescue.

The seas came roaring up with furious rage, as the sloop flew before them, some breaking aboard; and rounding to under the stern of the ship, she again hove to. Many people appeared on the deck of the stranger who, stretching out their arms, implored assistance. How was it to be afforded? Would a boat live in such a sea? Pearce Ripley offered to make the experiment if men were found ready to go with him. There was no want of volunteers. A boat was lowered. It seemed as if she must be engulfed before she left the sloop's side. Ripley's pro-

gress was watched by eager eyes from both ships. Now he is in the trough of the sea, a watery mountain about to overwhelm him; now he is on the summit surrounded by driving foam. A shout is raised as he neared the sinking ship, but to get alongside was even more dangerous than the passage from one to the other. As the ship rolled and her deck was exposed to view, he saw that there were women on board, and other people besides the crew. Ropes were hove to him. He seized one, and sprang up the side. A few hurried words told him what had occurred. The ship was conveying troops and stores to Halifax, the master and first mate had been washed overboard, the second lay wounded by the falling of a spar. Many of the crew had been lost with the captain. There was no sea officer who could enforce orders; the men were mutinous. Ripley instantly assumed the command. There were several ladies. "They must first be placed in safety before a man enters the boat," he cried out, presenting a pistol at some seamen who showed an intention of leaping into her.

Some entreated that their husbands might accompany them. "O father, father, come with me," exclaimed a fair girl, who was being con-

veyed to the side to be lowered into the boat; "I cannot, I will not leave you." She looked towards a fine, soldier-like man, who stood with several officers around him. "Impossible! Heaven protect you, dearest. Even for your sake I cannot desert my post. It is here with my men," was the answer.

The boat had already nearly as many persons in her as it would be safe to carry. This was no time for delay. Pearce lifted the young lady in his arms, and lowered himself with her into the boat. The boat returned to the "Vestal," and all those who had been rescued were put on board. The young lady again and again entreated him to save her father. Pearce promised to make every effort to bring off the colonel. "But unless his men are rescued, I doubt that he will leave the ship," he added, as he returned to his boat.

Two other boats were now lowered, but it was too evident that they could only save a part of the people from the foundering ship. Those on her deck were now seen forming a raft. It was their last hope of life should the boats not take them off. Though several of the people made a rush to the side, they were driven back by the officers and soldiers who re-

mained firm, and the men were told off in order to allow of them to embark as arranged by Pearce. Twice the boat returned without an accident to the "Vestal." The young lady cast a reproachful look at Ripley, when she saw that her father was not among the saved. "He would not come, but I will make another effort," he exclaimed, as he prepared once more to leave the corvette's side. Just then arose the fearful cry, "She is sinking! she is sinking!"

"Oh, save him! save him!" shrieked the poor girl in an agony of terror, stretching out her hands towards the spot where she fancied that she saw her beloved father struggling in the waves. Pearce and his brave companions needed not such an appeal to make them use every effort to reach their drowning fellow-creatures. Some had leaped on the half-finished raft as the ship sank beneath them, but many of these were speedily washed off. Others were clinging to spars and oars. Pearce was soon in the midst of the hapless beings, many with despair on their countenances, unable to reach the boat, sinking as he neared them. He looked round for the colonel. He could not distinguish him among the rest. Three people had been hauled in, when as the boat rose to

the summit of a sea he saw below him a person clinging to a spar. A hand was waved towards him. "Give way, lads," he shouted, and in another minute he had the satisfaction of hauling on board the brave officer for whom he was searching.

The other boats took off the people from the raft. He picked up several more, and returned in safety on board. The meeting of the father and his daughter need not be described. They were, he found, a colonel and Miss Verner. He was struck by the name as that of his former unamiable messmate. When the weather moderated, and the colonel was sufficiently recovered to appear on deck, he warmly expressed his gratitude to Pearce, and his admiration of the gallantry he had displayed. His daughter Alice was not less grateful.

At length the "Vestal" dropped her anchor in the harbor of Halifax, and with a regret which surprised him, Pearce saw the passengers depart for the shore.

"Remember, my dear Mr. Ripley, Miss Verner and I shall at all times be glad to see you," said Colonel Verner as he was about to leave the ship. Alice did not say as much as her father, but Pearce believed from the expression

of her countenance that she willingly seconded her father's invitation.

The next day a special invitation to the governor's table, where he met Colonel and Miss Verner, and where all the gentlemen from the governor downwards took especial notice of him, considerably altered his feelings. This was the first of many attentions which he received from the military officers and the principal inhabitants of Halifax. His time on shore was indeed fully occupied in making morning calls and in attending the parties to which he was invited. A portion of every morning he spent in the society of Miss Verner. It was very delightful, and he felt sure that he was welcome.

At length the "Vestal" was suddenly ordered to sea. Pearce had the greatest difficulty in getting on shore to wish his friends good-bye. Alice turned pale when he told her that the ship was to sail that evening. "You will come back here surely, Mr. Ripley," she said, in a trembling voice; "you have been every thing to us since that awful day when you saved our lives from the sinking ship; we shall miss you, indeed we shall, very much."

Pearce could not frame a reply, at least, satis-

factory to himself. He scarcely knew what he said, as he hurried away. The words might have made a vainer man than he was much happier than they did him.

The "Vestal" was bound for the West Indies. She cruised for some time, making several rich prizes, which she sent into Port Royal, Jamaica, and which filled the purses of her officers and men in a very satisfactory manner. Still, no honor or promotion was to be obtained by the capture of honest merchantmen. At length, however, there appeared a chance of falling in with an antagonist worthy of her. One morning at dawn a stranger was discovered on the lee beam. The "Vestal" was kept away, and all sail made in chase. As the "Vestal" gained on the chase, she was discovered to be a large ship, and pronounced to be flush-decked.

"Then we'll tackle her; never mind how many guns she carries," exclaimed the captain—a sentiment to which his officers and men responded heartily.

The chase was accordingly continued, and as the vessel came up with her on the weather quarter, it was seen that she was a large flush-decked ship, carrying twenty-two guns. The ensign of France flew out from the stranger's

peak, and was saluted by a shot from one of the corvette's bow-guns. The battle thus began, the "Vestal" keeping the weather gauge, was continued for half an hour with great fury, till the Frenchman's fore-mast went by the board. The enemy's guns were well handled, and the corvette began to suffer accordingly. The first lieutenant and five men were killed, and the captain, a midshipman, and several men wounded. The captain was carried below, and the command devolved on Pearce. The young lieutenant's heart beat high. "Bonham," he said, addressing his friend who was standing near him, "we'll take that ship, or go down with our colors flying." The breeze which had fallen returned, and as the corvette was still under perfect command, he was able at length to obtain a position by which he could pour several raking broadsides into the bows of the enemy. Her main-top mast was shot away; her mizen-mast followed. The ensign of France was again hoisted, but did not long remain flying. Pearce poured in another broadside, and down it came, the cheers of the British crew giving notice of what had occurred to their wounded shipmates below. The prize, which proved to be the "Desiree," had lost a

considerable number of her crew, most of them killed during the latter part of the action. Bonham was sent on board to take command, and in two days the "Vestal" and her prize entered in triumph the harbor of Port Royal. Here the admiral with part of the fleet were at anchor. Pearce went on board the flag-ship to make his report. He was warmly received, and highly complimented on his conduct. The next day he found that he was to be the first lieutenant of the corvette, and Bonham received an acting order as second lieutenant. The "Vestal" had received so much damage, that she was obliged to refit at Port Royal. This took several weeks, and Captain Gale considered himself sufficiently recovered, when she was ready, to go to sea in her. Pearce had, however, virtually the command. Several more prizes were taken. "That's young Ripley's doing," exclaimed the admiral; "he deserves his promotion, and he shall have it."

CHAPTER IV.

CAPTAIN RIPLEY AND ALICE VERNER.

ONCE more the "Vestal" was at anchor in Port Royal harbor. In vain her brave captain had striven against the effects of his wounds. He must return home if he would save his life, he was told, so he applied to be superseded. The admiral came on board the "Vestal" to inspect her. The next day he sent for Ripley, and put a paper into his hand. Pearce's heart beat quick with proud satisfaction. The document was an order to take the acting command of the corvette. "I have written home by this post to ask for your commission, and to recommend that you should be confirmed in the command of the 'Vestal,'" added the admiral. "I am sure that you will take care she does as good service as she performed under Captain Gale." Bonham, who had received his commission a few months before, became first lieutenant, and a young friend of the admiral's received an act-

ing order as second ; so that the united ages of the three principal officers of the ship amounted to little more than fifty-five years. Old heads were then worn on young shoulders. Many prizes had been taken, and the time approached for their return to Port Royal. The corvette lay becalmed. A French store-ship was expected, which had been separated from her convoy. The "Vestal" lay disguised, as was usual in those days, looking very unlike the smart sloop she was. A blue line was seen in the horizon, the sign of an approaching breeze, and in the midst of it a sail. The breeze brought up the stranger, a fine brig, to within about a mile, when it died away. She was an armed vessel, and showed by her colors that she was French. Before long, two boats were seen to put off from her. Three boats were instantly lowered from the opposite side of the "Vestal," and manned. The Frenchmen pulled rapidly on, expecting to make an easy prize of the "Vestal." Their look of consternation was very great when they first perceived the painted canvas which concealed the corvette's guns. Pearce had carefully watched for the first sign of their wavering, and now ordered the three boats to make chase. The Frenchmen taken

by surprise, made but a slight show of resistance, and in ten minutes the whole party found themselves prisoners on the deck of the corvette. The "Vestal" was now towed up towards the brig, which opened her fire at the boats, but this did not deter them from placing the corvette on her quarter, when a few rapidly delivered and almost raking broadsides compelled her to haul down her colors, having had the chief officers left on board and ten of her crew killed or wounded. The privateer, which mounted fourteen guns, was on her way to France, having a large amount of specie and valuable goods on board, the result of a successful cruise.

It was with no little pride that Captain Ripley returned to Port Royal from his first cruise, with the fine brig in company, the British ensign flying over that of France. The admiral congratulated him on his success, and at the same time put his commission and appointment into his hand.

"You must be ready for sea again very soon though," said the admiral; "I have dispatches to send to Halifax, and unless another cruiser comes, I must send you."

Pearce, rather to the admiral's surprise, re-

plied with animation, that he should be ready to sail that evening if required, provided he could get water, fuel, and fresh provisions on board. The admiral gave him permission to make everybody exert themselves.

By noon the next day the young commander had got his ship ready for sea, and receiving his dispatches with a joyous heart, he shaped a course for Halifax. A bright look-out was kept, but on this occasion it was to avoid strange sails. He was only to fight for the purpose of escaping capture. Halifax was reached, and Pearce having delivered his dispatches, hurried up to Colonel Verner's house.

Miss Verner was at home. She started, and the color rose to her cheeks when Captain Ripley was announced. She put out her hand, and did not withdraw it, for Pearce forgot to let it go.

"Are you really a captain already?" she asked.

"Yes; that is a commander. I am captain of the 'Vestal,'" he answered, and he told her how Captain Gale had been compelled to go home, and that he had been appointed in his stead. He mentioned also the number of prizes

he had taken — a matter which interested Colonel Verner more than it did her.

Pearce's stay at Halifax was likely to be short. He naturally wished to spend as much of his time as possible in Alice Verner's society. She invariably received him so frankly and cordially that all restraint was thrown aside. He felt almost sure that she loved him; so he took her hand and told her how much he loved her, and that he believed he had made enough prize money already to enable her to live as she had been accustomed to; that he hoped to make more, and that he had good reason to believe he should before long be a post captain, when he should be her father's equal in rank. Alice was not very much surprised nor agitated, because she was before sure that he loved her. Still it was very pleasant to hear him say so. While seated together, and interested more in themselves than in the world at large, the door was suddenly opened, and Lieutenant Harry Verner was announced.

"Why, Cousin Harry, where have you dropped from?" said Alice, rising to welcome him, "I did not even know that you were a lieutenant. You have grown up out of a little midshipman since I saw you last."

"I've dropped from His Britannic Majesty's Frigate 'Hecate,' of which I have the honor of being third lieutenant," announced the young man, looking fixedly at Pearce as he spoke.

"I beg your pardon, Captain Ripley," said Alice, recovering herself from the slight confusion into which she had been thrown; "I should have introduced my cousin to you."

"Harry Verner and I are old shipmates I suspect, unless there are two of the name very much like each other," said Pearce, rising and putting out his hand.

"Yes, as midshipmen we were together, I believe," answered Harry, superciliously; "but really it is difficult to remember all one's old shipmates."

Pearce under some circumstances would have been inclined to laugh at Harry Verner's impudence, but it was very evident that the lieutenant wished to pick a quarrel with him, which was by all means to be avoided. Alice had thought her cousin a tiresome boy; he now appeared to have grown more disagreeable than before. Colonel Verner came in and welcomed his nephew, who was the only son of his elder brother; other guests arrived, and the conversation became general. Harry at once assumed

to be the person of most importance in the house, and though he was laughing and talking with every one, Alice discovered that he was constantly watching her and Captain Ripley whenever they spoke. Captain Ripley had to return on board. He never slept out of his ship if he could avoid it.

Harry showed no intention of going to bed till Pearce had taken his leave, and Alice had retired. He then, jumping up from the sofa on which he had thrown himself, exclaimed, "My dear uncle, where did you pick up that man?"

"Whom do you mean, Harry?" asked the colonel, rather astonished at his nephew's somewhat impertinent manner.

"Why, Captain Ripley, who has just left," answered the lieutenant. "He seems as much at home with Alice as if he were engaged to her."

"Really, Harry, you are speaking too fast," said the colonel; "Captain Ripley is one of the finest officers in the navy, and having rendered the greatest possible service to my daughter and me, I feel bound to treat him with every consideration and kindness."

"Which he repays by aspiring to my cousin's hand," answered Harry. "Were he a man of

family I should say nothing, of course ; but he is, sir, a mere adventurer."

"Though what you say may be true, Harry, that cannot detract from Captain Ripley's fine qualities nor relieve me of the obligations I owe him," he observed after a time. "Of course, were he to dream of marrying Alice, that would alter the case, and I should be compelled to put a stop to our present friendly intercourse ; but I do not believe that such an idea enters his head."

"Not so sure of that," said Harry ; "Ripley was always very determined when he made up his mind to do a thing, and you will pardon me, uncle, but the way in which he was speaking to her when I came into the room was anything but that of an ordinary acquaintance."

"I'll see about it, I'll see about it," exclaimed the colonel, now more than ever annoyed.

Harry Verner retired to rest that night under the comfortable belief that he had revenged himself on the man whom he had always disliked, and now envied, for his rapid promotion and success.

CHAPTER V.

RAPID PROMOTION.

THE arrival of the "Hecate" relieved the "Vestal," which was ordered to proceed at once to sea. Poor Alice received Captain Ripley with marks of sorrow in her countenance which alarmed him. "My father will not hear of it," she exclaimed, giving way to a burst of grief; "but I told him, and I promise you, that I will marry no one else."

"I know, I feel, and I am sure you will not, dearest," said Pearce, tenderly gazing at her. "And be of good courage, I trust yet to do deeds and to gain a name to which those who now scorn me for my humble birth may be proud to ally themselves."

Before night the corvette was far away from Halifax. Pearce was not exactly unhappy, but he was in an excellent mood for undertaking any daring act which might present itself. Once more he returned to Jamaica, picking up

a few prizes on the way. "Always welcome, Captain Ripley," said the admiral, cordially greeting Pearce when he appeared at the Penn to report himself. "You've done so well in the sloop that we must get you into a small frigate; you'll not have to wait long for a vacancy, I dare say." This commendation was sufficient to restore Pearce's spirits. Several more prizes were taken, and a considerable amount of damage to the commerce of the enemy; but still the "Vestal" had not fallen in with an enemy the conquest of whom would bring glory as well as profit. Week after week passed away. It had been blowing hard. The wind dropped at sunset; the night was very dark and thick, an object could scarcely have been discerned beyond the bowsprit end. The island of Deserade, belonging to France, bore southeast by south, six or seven leagues, when, as day broke and the light increased, a ship was perceived close on the weather-beam, which in a short time was made out to be an enemy's frigate. The breeze had by this time sprung up again and was blowing fresh.

"We may fight her or try to escape," said the captain to Bonham, eyeing the frigate as if he would rather try fighting first.

"I should say that the odds being so greatly against us we ought to try to escape," answered the first lieutenant.

Sail was accordingly made to the north-west, but no sooner had she shaped a course than the frigate under a cloud of canvass came tearing after her at a rate which proved that the "Vestal" had not a chance of escaping. The crew showed by unmistakable signs that they expected to be captured, by going below and putting on their best clothes. Pearce called them aft. "Lads, we have served together for three years, and done many a deed to be proud of. Do not let the Frenchmen boast that they took us without our having done our best to prevent them. I purpose to fight that frigate if you will stand by me, and that I am sure you will."

"Aye, aye, that we will, and would were she twice as big, and sink at our guns before we strike," shouted Dick Rogers, and their loud cheers expressed the sentiments of the rest. The corvette at once prepared for action, and as soon as all was ready she shortened sail to allow the frigate to come up, greatly to the Frenchmen's surprise probably. The latter began firing as soon as her guns could reach the corvette. "Let not a shot be returned till I give the order,

lads," cried Ripley; "we must throw none away." He waited till his carronades would tell with effect. "Now give it them, lads," he shouted.

The heavy shot crashed against the side of the frigate in a way which astonished the Frenchmen. With wonderful rapidity the guns were run in, loaded, and again sent forth their death-dealing shower of iron, this time tearing through the frigate's upper bulwarks, sweeping across her quarter-deck and wounding her masts.

The Frenchmen had just fired a broadside which had killed three of the "Vestal's" crew, knocked one of her boats to pieces, and done other damage, but had not materially injured her running rigging. Firing another broadside in return, Pearce saw that by wearing sharp round he could pass under the stern of the frigate, and at the same time bring a fresh broadside to bear on her. The manœuvre was rapidly executed, the effect was very great on board the enemy. The crew were seen to be hurrying to and fro as if in dread of some event about to occur. It was next seen that all sail was being made on the frigate. The men had deserted their guns. The British seamen plied the enemy with their carronades with still

greater energy. The great masses of iron were hauled in and out as if they had been made of wood. Their only fear was that their antagonist would escape them. More sail was made on the corvette to keep up with him. To prevent the corvette from following, the Frenchmen again returned to their guns, and the frigate suddenly hauling up let fly her broadside.

Pearce saw the manœuvre about to be executed, and was just in time to haul up also to save the "Vestal" from being raked. The frigate's shot accompanied by a shower of musketry, came tearing on board. The last broadside from the frigate told with fearful effect on the corvette. Her spars and rigging were much cut about; three more men were struck, and the brave captain was seen to stagger back. Had not Rogers sprang forward and caught him in his arms he would have fallen to the deck. He was speechless, but he motioned to Bonham, who ran up to continue the fight. When an attempt was made to carry him below, he signified that he would remain on deck till the battle was won. The surgeon came up and stanchd the blood flowing from his shoulder. The nervous system had received a violent shock, but he could not tell whether the wound would

prove mortal. Still the battle raged. The French were again seen to quit their guns. The corvette followed up her success. It was observed that buckets were being hauled up through the ports, the frigate must be on fire ; her foremast fell, the corvette ranged up alongside, the French ensign was still flying. Bonham was ordering another broadside to be poured in, when down came the enemy's flag.

"Go and help the poor fellows," were the first words the young captain spoke. The corvette's boats which could swim were lowered and armed with buckets, the English seamen hurried up the sides of their late opponent. The fire was at length got under, very much by the efforts of the Englishmen, who had to hint to the French that if they did not exert themselves they would be left to perish, as it would be impossible to get them all on board the corvette before the frigate would become untenable.

The corvette succeeded in carrying her prize to Jamaica. The admiral himself came on board to see Ripley, and to congratulate him on his achievement. "Your promotion is certain, Captain Ripley," he said kindly ; "and I should think his Majesty, when he hears of your gallantry, won't forget to give a touch on your

shoulder with the flat of his sword. You will find a handle to your name convenient, and you deserve it, that you do, my lad."

The admiral's kindness contributed much to restore Pearce to health. While he remained on shore Bonham received an acting order to take command of the "Vestal." Before Pearce had totally recovered he received his post rank with a complimentary letter on his gallantry. Bonham, at the same time, found that he was made a commander; the "Vestal," having been upwards of four years in commission, was ordered home, Captain Ripley taking a passage in her. She escaped all the enemy's cruisers, and arrived safely in Portsmouth harbor. She was, however, considered fit to go to sea again after an ordinary repair, and was recommissioned by Captain Bonham. Pearce was sent for by the First Lord of the Admiralty to attend the King's levee. He was presented to his Majesty, who truly loved a sailor, and knew how to appreciate honor and valor. On kneeling to kiss his sovereign's hand he felt a touch on his shoulder, and with astonishment, gratitude, and delight, heard the King say, "Rise, Sir Pearce Ripley; you are well deserving of knighthood."

CHAPTER VI.

CONCLUSION.

Two years had passed by. Colonel Verner, now a general, with his daughter, had returned to England, and they were spending some weeks during the summer at the house of a friend. Alice looked thinner and paler than formerly, but her beauty was in no way impaired, and the sweet smile which lit up her countenance was still there.

The admiral's house commanded an extensive view, looking across to Portsmouth, down the channel. One bright morning after breakfast, the admiral, as usual, with his eye at the telescope, was watching the ever-varying scene on the waters before him, when he exclaimed, "Two frigates standing in, and one is French, a prize to the other. To my eye the Frenchman seems the biggest of the two; I must send over and learn all about it." He rang the bell, his old coxswain appeared. "Judson, take the wherry

and board that frigate, and give my compliments and learn the particulars of the action, and if her captain can spare time I shall be very glad to see him. Here, give this note if ——” The admiral spoke a few words in an under tone heard by no one else.

Judson hurried off. There was a fair breeze. Alice watched the progress of the boat with great interest. She reached the English frigate. remained a short time, and was speedily on her way back. Before she had long left the frigate she was followed by another boat which overtook her as she reached the shore.

A short time afterwards, Judson appeared, and put a card into his master's hand, “Say that I shall be delighted to see him when he can come up.”

“What about the action, Judson?” asked the admiral.

“Just the finest, sir, that has been fought during the war,” answered Judson. “He'll be up here presently, and tell you more about it than I can.”

Scarcely ten minutes had passed by, when Judson announced “Captain Sir Pearce Ripley!” The admiral received the young captain with every mark of regard. “And now let

me introduce you to my guests, General and Miss Verner ; but, by the by, you know them, I think."

The admiral having listened to an account of the action, dragged off the general to see some improvements on the farm ; the ladies of the family left the room, and Pearce Ripley heard from Alice's own lips that her father fully sanctioned their union. He claimed a sailor's privilege, and before a month had passed their marriage took place.

Bonham obtained his post rank, and though he had not the talent of his friend, he ever proved himself an active efficient officer. Harry Verner quitted the service, finding that, notwithstanding his connections, his merits were not appreciated, and that he was not likely to obtain his promotion. He soon afterwards broke his neck out hunting. Sir Pearce Ripley in due course became an admiral, and was created a baronet, and his sons entering the navy rose to the highest rank in their noble profession.

THE END.





